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Plain-dealing:

O R,

A Full and Particular
Examination of a late

TREATISE,

INTITULED,

HUMANE REASON.

By *A. M.* a Countrey-Gentleman.



CAMBRIDGE:

Printed by *J. Hayes*, Printer to the U-
niversity, for *Henry Dickinson*
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OR,

A full and particular
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Humane Reason.



His little Pamphlet, called *Humane Reason*, brought into my mind that saying of the Moral-ist, that every thing hath two Handles. For if it be true of any thing, it is true of this Book.

Lest therefore it should be taken by the wrong Handle, and so prove mischievous, I have thought fit (because the Author will

A. 3.

not

not do it himself) to do him that right to explain the true meaning of his words as near as I can guess it : and if I have done it according to his mind, I expect he should give me thanks for it ; but if I have mistaken him he may thank himself, and may free himself by better explaining his intentions.

His Design (he saith) was to search for a Guide to Happiness, and to communicate the effects of this search to others, if he thought it might be profitable ; which it seems he doth think in that he hath published this Treatise.

Before I go further, I will tell this Gentleman a Story, by which he shall see how profitable a Guide he hath found out.

Travelling once where I was a meer stranger, I enquired of a lusty Fellow I hapned to meet withall, which was the way to the next Town, who after he had once or twice look'd wisely about him, and very considerately scratch'd his noddle, told me I must go by the Esq; his house.

You may imagine (Sir) that I was very well inform'd in my way by this Answer : and truly (Sir) you must pardon me if I think the most of Men no better inform'd in the way to Happiness by that direction which (after all your consideration) you have found out, and propos'd to them.

For all that you have said comes to no more then this, that every one must follow right Reason

Reason which is his direct way. Now he that doth not beforehand know wherein right Reason doth consist (as most of mankind do not) will be as much to seek in his way notwithstanding your directions, as I was in mine, not knowing whereabouts the Esquire's house was to which my wise Guide directed me.

I cannot but be of this Gentlemans opinion, that by reason of the intricacies of the way to Happiness to choose the right paths, and then to guide our selves in them, we had great need have a better eye-sight then is left us by the fall of our first Forefather : but how this consideration (after a long and serious debate thereof as this Author professeth, p. 2.) brings no other Guide to him but his own Reason, I must confess I am not able for my life to understand. For I cannot apprehend that Reason is a better Guide, but the very same that was left us by the Fall of our first Forefather. I know of no other Guide that was left us after this Fall but *Humane Reason*, wherefore by telling us that we had great need have a better Guide the Author himself hath refuted his whole Book; for then we have need of a better Guide then *Humane Reason*. Thus Truth will out sometimes in spite of a mans teeth.

For true it is, that our Reason got so great a bruise by that Fall, that to suppose (with this Gentleman) that every man's Reason

should take such directions as it ought and may do, and pursue those directions with care and constancy ; is a supposition just as probable, as to suppose, that every man living is wiser then *Solomon*: and a discourse built upon this supposal (as this I am examining seems to be) will amount to no more then this, That if the Sky falls we shall catch Larks. So that our Author by not telling us wherein right Reason doth consist, seems to be as ridiculous a Guide as he that should give a man that is to travel in a very intricate and unbeaten way, of which he knows not one step, no other directions but this, go your right way and you shall be sure to come safe to your Journeys end ; and as his direction and supposal are no less ridiculous, so I wish with all my heart they were no more pernicious in their consequence : but how impracticable they are, and how destructive to all Arts, Orders, and Societies, I shall endeavour to demonstrate by plain instances.

For if every man must make use of no other Guide but his own Reason (suppose in cases that concern his life and estate) and must take directions onely from himself, those two Honourable professions of Law and Physick, would be altogether useless to mankind, and unprofitable to the Professors : but because it is impossible that every man should have time, or leisure, parts, or conveniency to understand
either

either of these studies so well as they whose business and employment have mainly tended that way all their life time; all wise men think it convenient not to acquiesce wholly in their own judgment in cases of Physick and Law, but to consult the Lawyers and Physicians.

Neither is it sufficient to affright men from taking the Physicians advice, because some possibly have died of the Doctor; nor from consulting the Lawyers, though probably too many have lost their estates by their indirect counsels and proceedings.

The same also holds as to Divinity: For if men were as careful of their souls as of their bodies and estates, they would then in all difficult cases of conscience take the advice of Divines, as frequently as they do of the Judge or the Doctor in cases proper to them: Neither would they conclude (with our Author) that because probably too many have been misled by the errors and deceits of others; therefore they must have no other Guides to themselves but their own Reasons.

For there is a good honest old English Proverb, that will secure every wise man from this conclusion, *viz. He that is onely taught by himself hath a Fool to his Master.* We must not surely then be govern'd onely by our own Reasons exclusively taken from all other helps; for this would at once destroy all the chief

Professions of our Nation. We might then burn all our Studies and our Books, and pull down all our Colledges and Inns of Court and Chancery; nay, the Charter-house and the Royal Society it self, as well as all Schools of good Learning would be altogether useles, if without these advantages we could suppose every man wise enough to guide himself onely by his own Reason. Neither could any Laws, Order, or Society be long maintain'd, was every man resolv'd (with this Gentleman) to have no other Guide.

Thus put the Case in any Society whatever (let it be Charter-house it self) if the Master should (as I suppose his duty is) take care that the Laws and Orders of the Society should be preserved, executed and obeyed by every Member of it, should any peevish person in it refuse to pay obedience to them upon this pretence, that he is to be guided only by his own Reason, I appeal to this Author himself whether he would be satisfied with this answer; or whether he would not (if it lay in his power) turn such a refractory Fellow out of his society unless he did conform himself to the Orders and Statutes of it? If not it would be impossible for him to maintain the Society: if he would expel him, he clearly proves that the Principle on which he seems to build his whole Book, is not to be allow'd to any person that is subject to the Laws of any Society.

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If He shall say that therefore he added those limitations (if it take such directions as it ought and may do , &c.) I would fain know in any Society who shall be Judge whether or no every Member of it doth rightly limit his Reason, shall the Person himself, or the Governour of the Society ? If the person himself then the limitations signifie nothing, and the Society would soon signifie as little : if the Governour must be so far Judge as to punish those Actions that are done contrary to the Statutes and Orders of the place , then why should not the Governors of the Church be allowed the same power ? I cannot see any Reason at all unless we are arrived at that madness to think it indifferent whether the Church be dissolved or upheld, or whether we have any Religion in our Nation or none at all.

I would not be one of that number who should dispute against the power and privileges of *Humane Reason*; for no man loves Reason better then my self : nor would I assert any such Priviledge to exempt men from Laws or from the publick exercise of Religion. For I think nothing can be more unreasonable : and yet I am deceived if I have not proved that this Assertion (which is the whole sum of our Authors Book) is of that nature.

But he hath one killing Argument that (like a two-edged Sword) doth execution both ways , with which he strikes all dead that dare.

dare oppose him. And this it is, page 3.

“ They that dispute most against Reason, do
 “ it because their own Reason perswades
 “ them to that belief, &c.

This is just such a mortal Argument as the
 Papists use, to prove that the Church is the
 onely Rule of Faith. For (say they) whoso
 denies this and asserts the Scripture to be the
 Rule of Faith can have no Authority nor
 Ground for their Belief of the Scripture but
 the Authority of the Church: and therefore
 we ought to believe as the Church teacheth
 us, and not as the Scripture.

But the Answer is not very hard to be made
 to the *Romanists*. It is true indeed, the rea-
 son why we believe the four Gospels and the
 Epistles to be the Writings of those Divinely-
 inspired persons, whose Names they bear, must
 be this, because they have been so received by
 the Church in all Ages, and the reason why
 we believe those Miracles were done as they
 are related in Scripture, must be from the con-
 stant Testimony of the Universal Church, and
 from these Miracles we are sure they were
 written by persons inspired by God, and con-
 sequently that they are the Rule by which we
 are to walk: Thus the Authority of the
 Church onely leads us to the Scriptures as an
 infallible Rule, and leaves us there to be gui-
 ded by them, and not by the Church any fur-
 ther than her Commands are agreeable to the

Com-

Commands of God contained in the Scriptures.

Neither is the Answer much different, nor much more difficult to our Authors dead-doing Demonstration; for though Reason must direct us to a Rule by which we are to act, yet when we have once found out such a Rule as our Reason assures us is Infallible, we then ought to govern our selves no longer by our bare Reason, but by our Reason guided by that Rule, and to act those things (not that Reason onely doth direct us) but such things as our Infallible Rule commands us.

So that we see Reason is so far from being our onely Guide, that it directly leads us to the Scriptures and leaves us to be directed by them, by which it confesseth that it self ought to be guided.

If the Author shall now say that I have mistaken his Notion, and that his intention in this Book was onely to bring Men into their right wits, and make Men consider the reasonableness of the Religion of the Church of England, and consequently conform themselves to it: I shall say no more then this to him, that I wish he had made this Design more apparent, that our Dissenters might not have joyn'd in the mistake of his Book, and have construed it to the countenancing all Divisions: and that he had not given by the whole contrivance of his

his Book so just cause of this scandal to them.

For the Book hath in most parts a double face, that (like *Janus* his) looks two directly contrary ways at once; and therefore we may justly suspect a double mind and some double dealings in the Author: but this I must needs say for him, that he hath ingeniously contriv'd it; for (like an armed *Amazonian* beauty) it casts a pleasing look, and seems to smile upon every one that looks on it, and yet it bears about it the Instruments of death.

I only make this my request to him, if he writes again, that he would show the world more of his honesty, though less of his ingenuity, by speaking plain truth, but not Oracles that may be interpreted to comply with contradictions; and lest he should mistake my Design, I will deal plainly and tell him what it is, *viz.* to do the duty of an honest English Gentleman, and a good Christian by doing my endeavours (according to my small abilities) to preserve the Unity of the Church of *England* into which I was baptized. I shall therefore endeavour to free the minds of all impartial Readers from those mistakes that might arise from this Book I am now examining. To which end because some may perhaps be drawn into a maze by reading it, (as the Author was in writing it) I shall endeavour to show them the way out of it by walking along with them step by step, and so letting them.

them see the way back again by the same steps as they were at first led into it. And now to my Task.

The Gentleman, foreseeing (as well he might) that many Objections would be raised against him in the first place, applies himself to ward them off, pag. 3. & 4.

Object. 1. He thus proposeth, "That many of the greatest Wits have by following their own Opinions encreased the Catalogue of Heresies. To this he answers, "That these Men either followed not their own Reason but their Wills, or first huddled their Reason by interest and prejudice or passion, &c.

All this I easily grant is truth: but now I appeal to this Author himself whether he doth not believe that the number of those that follow their Wills more then their Reasons, that are blinded with interest, prejudice or passion, that are wanting in qualifications necessary to inform themselves in matters of Religion, or that are capable of being deceived by some one or all of these causes, or else by the weakness of their understanding does far exceed the number of those that are wise, sober and learned? If he must affirm that he doth believe it, why then would he have every man left to be guided by his own Reason? which is the best way to prevent Heresies, for the Magistrates

to let their Subjects follow their own wills and passions, &c. (the greatest part of which they must know will thereby be exposed to irreligion and Atheism as well as all kind of heresie and debauchery) or else to restrain them by moderate penalties within the pale and limits of the best and most Christian Church in the world.

But (saith our Author) it is no great matter for falling into heresies by the weakness of their understanding.

For (saith he pag. 4.) "They are neither hurtful to themselves nor others.

But hold (Sir, I beseech you) I had always thought that wilful ignorance had been so far from excusing a fault that it made it much greater: so that the weakness of the understanding, if it might have been remedied by our industry and humility, will in no wise excuse us for heresie: Nay, I also thought that supposing our ignorance that leads into any crime was invincible, and therefore the sin might not be damnable to us; yet it might chance to be (as this of heresie especially is) very hurtful, nay damnable to others by leading them into it after our example, for which they could have no excuse but their own folly.

I always therefore thought it a very great duty in a Gentleman to abstain from common and scandalous vices, not onely for fear of his own danger, but for fear of endangering others.

ther men, who I know are more led by the examples of the Nobility and Gentry, then by the Precepts of the Clergy though they should speak like Gods, or live like Angels. There being then so much danger from heresies, it becometh all persons seriously to consider whether their weakness of understanding (by which they are led into errours, and by which this Gentleman would excuse all heresies) does not proceed from their own wills; and whether they are not ignorant, because they will not be better inform'd? For if their errours and weakness do proceed from their obstinate, perverse, and contumacious resistance of authority, this turns even the least of errours into the most damnable and worst of heresies. And this I heartily refer to the serious consideration of all those that separate from the Church of *England*, as they tender the publick peace, and welfare of the Nation, or the eternal safety of their own or other mens souls, that they examine themselves impartially whether ever they did inform themselves concerning that which they dislike in the Church; and if they did not, let them do it speedily, and sincerely. For otherwise they will be guilty of speaking evil of those things which they understand not, and of wilful Schism and Heresie.

As for that which our Author saith, That
 "to relie upon the Church was to add perpe-
 "tuity and universality to our Errours.

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It is nothing at all to us of the Church of England; since I am sure the worst of her Enemies cannot accuse her of enjoining the belief of any Error. If they can, let them do it, and I will promise them if it cannot be answered fully and satisfactorily to any unprejudiced judgment, I my self will give them publick thanks for their information. If they cannot accuse her of any Error in all her Doctrine, certainly it must be a piece of the greatest folly (not to say contumacy) to continue in a wilful breach of her Communion.

The Second *Objection* which he endeavours to hit off, is,

“The frailty, uncertainty and disproportion of Divine Truths to our understanding, &c. pag. 5, 6.

I shall not quarrel with him as to the main of his Answer to this *Objection*: but I cannot agree with him in saying as he doth, “That every mans soul hath in it self so much light as is requisite for our travel towards Heaven. pag. 5. For this I apprehend to be down-right *Pelagianism*, an heresie long since condemned by St. *August*. and the concurring Votes of the whole Church; or if it be not *Pelagianism*, sure I am it is a much worse heresie, if not the very renouncing of Christianity. What luck the Gentleman had to

to excuse Heresie just in the last paragraph since he falls into it himself in this ! God help the weakness of his understanding ! but perhaps he will tell us that he doth not believe it an Heresie, notwithstanding it is condemn'd by the Church, or contrary to the Christian Religion. But Sir, what would you say if it be condemn'd by *Humane Reason* ? Surely then you will confess it an Heresie. Therefore that you may be convinced, be pleas'd to look back but three Pages, and you will find it directly contradictory to what that Book tells us, *pa. 2. l. 14.* That "to guide him in the right way
 "one had great need of a better Guide then
 "that which was left us by the Fall of our
 "first Forefather. But what need (I pray you Sir) is there ? when you your self tell us,
 "That every mans Soul hath in it self so much
 "light as is requisite for our travel towards
 "Heaven.

Is not this a sufficient Example of the frailty and uncertainty of *Humane Reason* ? since this Author who is the greatest pretender to it (even in that Book in which he makes it his business to perswade others to follow it and nothing else) doth so readily fall into so apparent an Heresie and contradiction to himself, though by his Book (in which he hath so well manag'd so ill a cause) we must acknowledge him to have the advantage of most men in strength of Reason.

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Is not this enough to abate our overweening confidence in our own opinions, and make us a little afraid how we follow so uncertain a Guide as our own Reason, which hath so palpably deceived our Author?

This I do acknowledge to him, that by God's Free-grace and Mercy, concurring with the Ministry of the Gospel, every man hath sufficient Light to show him the way to Heaven, if he will use those Helps which God hath prepared for him to that purpose: but as for his direction that we must seek Truth in the centre and heart of our selves, if he gives it universally to all Men and concerning all Truths (as he seems to do in that he hath not at all limited it) he might as well have bid men search there for all the demonstrations of *Euclid*, though they never had time, nor education enough to make them understand so much as one of the most ordinary operations in Arithmetick, nor one Mathematical Definition or postulatum. And he had as good damn such a man to the centre of the Earth as to set him to search for Mathematicks in the centre of himself, in which there is nothing but guts, and the most of men would have as pleasant a search for Divine Truths in the centre of themselves, and as sure they would be to find it there, as the Augurs of old were to find out future events by poring on the guts and garblish of brute beasts. For is not he
(think

(think you) very likely to find all Divine Truths in the bottom of his heart which are contain'd in the Scriptures, who is not able for his heart to understand sense when he reads it in other Authors, nor one word of the genuine Languages of the Sacred Writings? Truly for my part, I am almost of the opinion that since Truth lies in the bottom, our Author should have bid them search not in the centre but in the bottom of themselves for it, and then to be sure (if there was any Truth to be found) they must of necessity smell it out immediately. For this had been a direction much more suitable to his similitude, and no less beneficial to his vulgar Reader: unless he will turn Quaker, and assert that upon their search they shall immediately be inspired with new Light that shall lead them into all Truth, which when he doth he may expect a further answer.

The third *Object*. is that which he himself calls the most tragical Argument against him, pag. 6. viz.

“ That an universal liberty of particular
 “ mens discourses would beget as many Re-
 “ ligions as there are men, which would be
 “ inconsistent with the peace of all Socie-
 “ ties.

Which he endeavours to shift off by the Examples of the different “ Sects of the ancient Philo-

Philosophers. For (saith he) "there were
 "not fewer Sects in *Athens* then in *Amster-*
dam or *London*: and yet this variety of opi-

nions, neither begat any civil War in *Greece*,
 "neither was there any Inquisition, nor High-
 "commission to prevent it.

This Evasion is like a great deal more of
 his Book, meer Supposition. For I believe it
 will puzzle this Gentleman to prove, that all
 these Sects amongst the *Athenians* did do any
 thing more then dispute these things in the
 publick Schools onely to exercise their Wits
 and improve their Reasons; to make Truth
 appear more apparently, and to exercise their
 young Scholars in disputing that they might
 better know how to defend their Religion:
 As now it is and (I believe) ever was in
 our Universities, where all or most of those
 Questions are commonly disputed in the pub-
 lick Schools that were then argued in *A-*
thens; to the end that Scholars having heard
 all Objections amongst themselves, might be
 the more able to defend Truth when they
 came abroad into the world: So that he that
 calls these Sects in *Athens*, may as well say,
 that there are as many Sects in *Cambridge* or
Oxford as there are Questions disputed in their
 publick Exercises: which would amount to
 some thousands every year. For as our Uni-
 versities do allow or at least permit all sorts of
 Disputations and Questions freely to be de-
 bated

hated in their Schools and Colledges in a Language not understood amongst the common people, but yet would make a severe example (as far as their power can extend) of him that should preach to the people any thing contrary to the Orthodox Religion established in our Church and Nation, and should endeavour to draw Parties after him ; so amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans* it is most probable that the Custom was the same. For we are sure, that whatever their Disputes were in their Academies and Schools of Learning, they had their stated Ceremonies and ways of Worship as well as their particular Deities, which it was in no wise lawful for any one amongst them to dare to contradict in their Discourses or Orations to the common people : and though this Gentleman so pertly saith, that they had no Inquisition nor High-commission, yet Court of Judicature they had wherein they did condemn all Innovators in matters of Religion, and punished those that were notorious even with capital punishments.

Now that I do not speak this by meer supposition and guess (as this Author doth most things he here saith) I shall give you the testimony of *Josephus* (an Author whose word may go as far as this Gentlemans) who about the latter end of his second Book against *Apion* tells us thus.

“ *Plato* commanded all his Citizens perfectly

"ly to learn his Laws, and that they should
 "persist in the unalterable observation of
 "them : But *Apollonius Molon* (saith the
 "same Author) " inveigheth against us for not
 "receiving into our Country, Men of strange
 "Opinions or Religion, whereas not only we
 "but the most prudent of all the *Greeks* do
 "the same ; the *Lacedemonians* did expel all
 "strangers ; neither did they permit their Ci-
 "tizens to travel into strange Countreys, fear-
 "ing that by both these ways their Laws might
 "be corrupted. *Apollonius* was ignorant how
 "matters stood with the *Athenians* (and
 "surely the Author of *Humane Reason* was much
 "more ignorant of them) " who boast their
 "City was free for all Nations ; for they did
 "most severely and without all mercy, punish
 "those that did but speak any word against
 "their Gods.

But saith this Gentleman, " Every one in
 "Greece enjoyed his Opinion with more safety
 "and freedom then either his Goods or his
 "Wife, pag. 9. But if he means the publick
 "profession of his Opinions, how notorious an
 "hummer he hath told us, will be evident from
 "the Examples the same *Josephus* gives us in the
 "same place. " *Socrates* (saith he) was put
 "to death by drinking Hemlock, because he
 "was accused that he corrupted young Men,
 "and contemned the Laws and Religion of
 "his Country. *Anaxagoras* for that he affirm'd
 the

" the Sun (which the *Athenians* worshipped
 " for a God) to be a fiery stone, was sentenced
 " to die. They also proclaimed, that whoever
 " would kill *Diagoras* of *Melus* should be
 " rewarded with a Talent for his labour, onely
 " because this *Diagoras* was said to deride
 " their Mysteries. *Protagoras* also had by
 " them been taken and put to death had he not
 " made a quick escape, onely for that they
 " supposed him to have written certain doubts
 " concerning the Heathen Gods.

What then would have become of our Author, who endeavours to excuse Atheism had he lived in *Athens*, and enjoyed no other liberty of Opinions then they allowed ?

But lest he should object any thing against *Josephus* his Testimony, the same thing is evident beyond all exceptions, by their so bloody persecutions of the Christians both amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans*. How much afraid were they of all Innovations in Religion when the most cruel Tortures that the wit and malice of men could invent, as Racks, Gybbets, Gridirons, red-hot Pincers, and fleaing alive, were daily inflicted upon Christians, onely because they taught a new Religion ?

This was that great Freedom (as this Gentleman calls it) that was allowed to Dissenters amongst the ancient Heathens. I do not wish our Author should meet with the same

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though he seems to be so much pleas'd with it, and though there was no Inquisition nor High-Commission amongst them.

Was ever man thus confident to assert things thus palpably false, which he (and every one else) must know to be so, unless he knows nothing of any History?

I suppose this was one of those Truths which he smelt out from the bottom, *viz.* "That this quiet and happiness which was enjoyed four thousand years amongst the Heathen continued so long and so uninterrupted, because every man following the rules of his own judgment, allowed that liberty to others, which he found so necessary for himself, as he saith, *pag. 9. in fine.*"

For the Reason is onely the quite contrary, *viz.* because they were so careful to preserve the publick Unity of Religion by the execution of their Laws. For I think I may justly challenge our Author to shew me (if he can) any of the ancient Heathens that ever gave a publick toleration of all Religions; though (if he could prove it) Christians ought not to follow their Examples, because we have a positive and stated Religion given us by God in a most clear and infallible revelation, which our Governours ought to establish and maintain; so that whatsoever he hath said to the contrary, it is evident by the consent of the whole world, that were there not Laws to
re-

restrain particular mens publick discourses; there would soon be as many Religions as there are men; and so the Argument remains as tragical as ever it did. For it appears by the Votes of all Nations, that varieties and alterations in Religion were always thought to be inconsistent with the publick peace and safety.

As for that flie insinuation with which he concludes that Paragraph (pag. 10.) That even the Scotecks themselves that enslav'd the Will, durst never attempt this violence to the understanding.

I would fain know of this Gentleman whether the Church of *England* goes about to enslave any mans understanding? hath not every one in her Communion a liberty of thinking what he pleases? All that the Church of *England* enjoyns us, is, that we shall worship God decently and orderly, and shall consent to the Articles of the Christian Faith, and not contradict those few Articles which she hath given us; but for peace sake shall quietly submit to them, and to her most moderate Discipline. I appeal even to this Author himself, whether the Members of any Society in the world either Heathen or Christian have a greater freedom of exercising their understandings, than those of the Church of *England*? If he cannot produce me any that have; then to what purpose doth he talk to Englishmen

men of violence to their understandings? unless it be *fortiter calumniari ut aliquid haberet*: which is a practise so much below a Gentleman, that sure our Author should be ashamed of it, or else he is a shame to the Honourable Title of an English Gentleman.

I pray you Sir, tell me upon your reputation what you meant, and of whom you spake those things, pag. 12, & 13. If you meant the Church of *England*, I must tell you, that you do not know any thing of her, though she be your own Mother.

Doth the Church of *England* teach her Followers to damn all that are not of their way? so far is she from it, and so prodigiously charitable, that she doth not exempt even those that die in a wilful separation from her (unless they be actually excommunicated) from Her most Christian form of burial, in which she professeth to hope of their salvation.

Is there any Son of the Church of *England*, that believes some Errours (that are the inseparable companions of Humane nature) do exclude men from the Communion of the present Church, or the hope of the future?

And as for that which he saith, that then we could not be so cruel to persecute those faults to which God is so merciful, and from which we our selves are not exempt,

I answer, That our Church punisheth no Man for any Errour, unless it be accompanied with

with contumacy, and contempt of Authority, and does not every Society in the world do the same? If then he will needs call this cruelty and persecution, he not onely accuseth our Church, but all the Nations of the world of those hard words.

He might (I think) well have spar'd all that Discourse (from p. 10, to the 14.) about the causes of so much bloodshed since the Reformation, unless he intended to make the Reformation guilty of all the bloodshed ever since it first began. However, sure I am, he cannot lay it at the door of our Church, since there is none of her true Sons, that ever was so mad to be guilty of any of those Causes which he gives of it.

As for his confident assertion with which he concludes that Section, It is much more applicable to the Papists and Fanaticks then to the truly reformed. For there are no men living that so much tie infallibility to what they think Truth, and Damnation to what they think Errours as they do at Rome and Geneva, and such amongst us, who have listd themselves under their Banners.

As for his peaceable Doctrine he so much boasts of, p. 11, & 12.

That every man should be suffered quietly to enjoy his own Opinion; and his own Opinion is this, that he should suffer others to do the same.

As to the first part of it ; I answer it is granted him.

For there is no Society in the world, that can take notice of matters of meer opinion ; but when those Opinions break out into practice, so as to disturb the publick peace, or at least to endanger a disturbance ; when men make use of them to draw parties after them, and to make Factions in a Nation, then those Governours must be blind that will not see to suppress them. And this is not punishing men for their Opinions, but their Practices in divulging and propagating those Opinions, which are contrary to the Laws and publick safety.

As for the second Part of it, that every man should have that Opinion implanted in him to suffer all others to enjoy their Opinions.

I answer, First, That it is almost impossible to suppose this to be, or that it ever can be the Opinion of every man. For if men do sincerely believe, that their Opinion is the Truth, and necessary to Happiness, then they must also think themselves bound to propagate it to all others.

But Secondly, Could we suppose this Opinion to be in every man, yet this would not maintain the peace of a Nation, if there were no Laws, to restrain men from being led by their passions and interest to act contrary to their Opinions. For I appeal to themselves to know

know whether the Papiſts and Preſbyterians do not act contrary to their own Principles in promoting a toleration of all Opinions? If they dare deny it, it will be eaſily prov'd againſt them. For the grand Turk himſelf doth not more violently perſecute the Chriſtians, then both theſe do all ſuch as differ from them in Religion, where they have power enough to do it. Witneſs the Inquiſition at this day in *Spain & Italy*; and the practice of the other party in *New-England*, where they puniſh Diſſenters from them even with capital puniſhments. Which are both ſo apparent to all the world, that they muſt have faces of braſs that dare to deny them.

And though now whiſt they are entangled and reſtrain'd by the Law, they are very quiet and tame (like the Lion in the net) yet let them but looſe and they will ſoon ſhow their natural inclinations and fall to their old wont of tearing and devouring all others that ſtand in their way.

Thirdly, That it will be altogether as hard a reſtraint to moſt men to be held by Law from acting in Religion contrary to our Authors opinion, which he would have univerſal, as it is for them to be kept to an uniformity in Doctrine, Diſcipline and Worſhip. So that this Opinion without Law is but a rope of Sand, which can never hold men together in peace and unity. But this I ſhall (I think) demonſtrate afterwards.

The Fourth *Objection* he would answer is this, p. 14.

“ That if we guide our selves wholly by
 “ our own Reason, we shall differ from our
 “ selves as well as all others, and change
 “ our Religion as often as our Habits.

To which the Author answers, p. 15. that,

“ He cannot conceive that the fear of this scan-
 “ dal obligeth us to a blind and unalterable ob-
 “ servance of those Laws and Opinions, to
 “ which either the fate of our Birth and Edu-
 “ cation or other accidents have engaged us.

Truly nor I neither; For hath not every one a liberty either to act according to the Laws he lives under, or else to suffer the penalties appointed by them, or else to leave that place and Country in which those Laws are in force? What need then of any such blind obedience? I protest I do not understand it, any more then I do conceive how all those Heresies, Schisms, Factions, and Debaucheries (to which every man is expos'd who guides himself wholly by his own Reason) are onely a scandal (as this Gentleman calls them) and not actual and damnable sins.

Sure I am, they are so accounted by St. Paul and St. Peter in their Epistles; but it may be this Author's *Humane Reason* doth not lead him to consult the Sacred Scriptures.

But this he excuses, p. 18, &c. by saying that,
 “ If after all our industry and humility, it
 be

" be our ill fortune to give away a Truth for
 " a Fallhood, it will be at the worst, but an
 " Errour by chance-medley, and will find,
 " nay even claim mercy from God, and de-
 " serve pity from Men.

In answer to which, I shall say no more but
 this, That there is nothing but invincible ig-
 norance that can possibly excuse the breach of
 a known Law, if the matter of it be neither
 impossible nor sinful; and therefore where the
 Matter is doubtful the Authority should over-
 sway us.

For in all doubtful Cases the safer part is
 to be taken: and it is much safer to erre in
 obedience to God's Vicegerents, then it is to
 erre on the contrary side. For if we erre in
 doubtful matters with authority, it is but a bare
 Errour at the most, and that on the right hand;
 but if we should be mistaken, and thereby diso-
 bey our lawful Magistrates, our Errour is then
 joyned with disobedience to the Ordinance of
 God, as the Apostle calls every Ordinance of
 Man, *Rom. 13. 1, 2.* and if we persist in this Errour
 and act according to the consequence of it, we
 are too easily, before we are aware, hurried into
 those horrid sins of Schism, Heresie, Sedition
 and Rebellion.

It therefore behoveth every one that sepa-
 rateth from our Church, seriously to examine
 his own Soul whether or no he doth be-
 lieve. (after he hath used his utmost industry

in informing himself both from his own Reason, and from the Reason of others, especially of his lawful Ministers) that the Church of England doth enjoyn him any thing that is sinful in it self; and if he cannot find her guilty of any such command, then his separation can be no ways excusable.

This I more particularly refer to the consideration of those persons, who but a year or two since joyn'd in her Communion; and especially of those who communicated with her upon the late Act of Parliament for the conviction of Romanists, and yet did separate themselves immediately from her publick Congregations, and continue still in their separation.

For if it was not sin in them to receive the Sacrament according to her Rites of Administration of it (which was the highest act of Communion and Conformity with her) could it be sin in them the next day to join with her in her publick Liturgy? so that their own practise must convince them that their's is a wilful sin, not any Errour by chance-medley.

But their great Friend our Author will find them out an Expedient to take away that concern from them. Alas, poor tender-conscienced people! Why should they be put to touch their consciences so hard? there is danger in it, it may make them quite sore since they are so tender already. No, no, onely come but
to

to this excellent Physician, and do but see him well, and he will give you a Plaister for your tender Consciences, that shall without any pain or trouble heal them immediately. The Receipt you have, p. 18. of his Book about the end. For,

He there finds you out a way how you may be Papists one seven years, and Protestants another, and yet your Faith still the very same (though I had thought the Romanists Creed had been directly contrary in many things to the Protestants) but it is no matter for that, this Gentleman hath one Panpharmakon, that cures all Diseases whatsoever though never so contrary one to another, viz. a pretty little-balsamick similitude, and this it is. There is such an identity in their faith, as there is in the eye which changes every seven years; and if their Faith be but actuated by the same soul of Faith, that is Conscience, if they keep but their Consciences inviolable, they may say with this very Faith, as well as with these Eyes, I shall see my Redeemer.

If this Gentleman had pleas'd, he might as well have said, that they might be Heathens one seven years and Christians another, and their Faith still the same. For the same Plaister well applied, would have heal'd this wound in the conscience as well as the other every jot.

For do but suppose that their Consciences were.

were but erroneous, they might still keep their consciences inviolable, under both these contrary Religions ; (*i. e.*) they might be sincere both when they were Christians and when Heathens ; and yet can any one think that the Christian Faith and the Belief of the Heathens is the same Faith ? Yes, (Quoth our Author) they are the very same exactly in effect ; both as to the Heathen and the Christian (let him change as often as he will) so he keep his conscience but inviolable, he shall go as safe to Heaven as those poor ignorant well-meaning Martyrs that sacrificed their lives, rather then they would admit of the least appearance of any change in their Religion. Pity it is this Gentleman was not living some 1500 years ago, what abundance of good Men might have been saved by this his Plaister, which for want of it bled to death.

For our Author could have told them, as long as their mind and intentions had been, but to have still continued Christians ; or if they had been mistaken in their judgments, and had thought they might have done it, they had been as good Christians, and as happy as any Martyr of them all, though they had sacrificed to the Devil himself. For that still if a mans conscience be erroneous, he may possibly all this while act according to his conscience, and so keep his conscience still inviolable.

But (I pray you Sir) do you believe your
own

own Doctrine? Can you think that an erroneous conscience shall excuse all crimes whatsoever? then I assure you I should be very loth to trust my life in your hands. For you might think your self a very good Christian, and yet cut my throat. For according to your Argument a man may murder his Prince or his Father, if his erroneous conscience tell him he may do it (as I shall afterwards prove it may) and yet be a very good Christian.

If this be true; sure our Author hath said enough to awaken our Magistrates to take care how mens consciences are inform'd and taught; and not to let men alone to their own Reasons, unless they have a mind to have their throats cut by good conscientious Christians.

But an erroneous conscience can in no case certainly excuse, but where the Error proceeds from such causes as the person could no ways help, as in the case of natural Fools and Mad-men, and in them it onely frees from the guilt and crime *in foro interno*, but not from the punishment *in foro externo*. For we have a Bedlam, and a Whip for Mad-men and Fools, as well as Stocks and Prisons, and Gallows for Knaves and Rogues.

Therefore let not our Separatists think, that their Errours shall excuse them before God, unless they think themselves stark Fools or Mad-men, that it is impossible for them to be better inform'd: nor that they ought to be par-

pardoned before Men. For let them pretend to what conscience they will for their actions, if they act contrary to the Laws, the Magistrate is bound in conscience to punish them, because of his Oath, according to the sentence of the Law: otherwise should mens Errours excuse them from penalty, all the crimes in the world would thereby be tolerated, and Christianity quite destroyed. For men that were led into Errours might deny Christ, and yet need not fear any punishment for it, because they might in it act according to their erroneous consciences, and so keep their consciences still inviolable.

What a company of Fools are we that take pains in studying to free our selves from Error? whereas (if this be true which our Author hath here endeavoured to prove) it is much more safe for us not to trouble our consciences at all with information; for if we do but act according to our consciences all's well enough, though they are never so wilfully erroneous.

This it seems is the new and modish way of Drilling in Popery amongst us, by bringing Men to renounce Christianity, by accounting all Religions indifferent; as is evident by the Jesuites practise upon the Quakers and Hectors of the Town, and that general Design of theirs of debauching our young Nobility and Gentry (wherever they can) with a contempt

tempt of Religion. He that doubts of this, may be fully satisfied by a late Treatise, call'd *Fiat Lux*, in which this Design is most conspicuous: from which I cannot but believe this Author hath taken the main of his *Humane Reason*. And indeed there can be no readier way possibly found out of bringing in the Romish Religion then this of rooting out Christianity; for as long as the Christian Principles remain firm in mens minds, it is impossible any one should change from the Church of England to the so palpable Errours, Juggles, Phantasm, and Idolatry of the Church of Rome.

But to argue with these Gentlemen upon their own Principles, If all kinds of Religion are so indifferent to them, why then should they not keep close to that of their own Country? since the consent of all Nations shows us that alterations in Religion are very dangerous to the publick peace and safety of any Kingdom.

Now that the Design of this Author is the very same with that of *Fiat Lux* will be evident to any attentive Reader, that will but seriously consider what he saith from p. 20. to the 27. or else I must confess that I am most grossly mistaken.

For having foreseen that it was possible for men by an erroneous conscience to excuse (according to his Doctrine) even the renouncing

Chri-

Christianity and the denying of Christ himself, He answereth that Objection not by recanting an opinion of so horrid a consequence to the Christian Religion, but by endeavouring to prove that the same might possibly follow, that Men might deny Christ by following any other Guide as well as this of *Humane Reason*.

Nay, to show the advantage of his Principle above all others, he declaims at a most prodigious rate of the great charitableness of his Opinion, that would set Heaven Gates so wide open, that Turks, Jews, Heathens, nay Atheists themselves might find an entrance thereat.

Now what doth this tend to in the direct consequence, but the very same as that other Treatise before mentioned? *viz.* to prove that Men may be saved by any kind of Religion whatsoever. And herein the two good wits jump exactly; onely this Gentleman doth a little out-doe the former, by not excluding Atheists from the Kingdom of Heaven: and by consequence he insinuates into the minds of men, that as to the main end which all aim at, *viz.* Happiness, It is indifferent whether men be Christians, Jews, Turks, Heathens, or Atheists: that is, in a word, whether Men have any Religion or none at all.

Is not this an admirable advantage that this Gentleman hath above all others in his *Humane Reason*? But

But I shall not spend time in declaiming against it, but will endeavour thoroughly to answer his Reasons for it. He endeavours to prove this first Assertion by a particular Examination of other Principles.

The first Principle he examines, is that of the private Spirit, or new Light.

This I easily grant is in its direct consequence a flat denial of the whole Gospel: but then this is our Authors own Opinion. For put but the Question home to any Quaker what he means by the Light within him? and his answer shall be either an evasion of the Question by running into railing, or else by some other terms of art amongst them, as Christ within them, &c. or else they must be forc'd to confess that they mean nothing else but natural conscience (i.e.) *Humane Reason* by all their cant of New Light. From whence nothing can be more evident then this, that since they make onely their natural conscience (or *Humane Reason* as our Author doth) the only Rule of all their Actions, they are at best but good Heathens. Now whether he saw this consequence of his Book or no, it seems they did. For (as I am very credibly inform'd) they sent an Agent extraordinary to this Author to give him thanks for his Book. Who (when he told their Agent that he was no Friend of the Quakers Opinion) was answered that he had set a fair step towards it, for

for which they gave him thanks. Now I wonder that our Jews, Infidels, and Atheists, together with all the debauched persons in London, were not as Gentile as the Quakers to pay their due thanks to this Author; who hath as well deserv'd it from every one of them, as he did from those his light-headed friends and acquaintance.

The Second Principle he examines, is the Authority of Men; particularly that of a Council.

"Which (he saith) may as well lead men to deny Christ, as every Mans own Reason.

"And for proof of it, he instanceth in the

"great Council of the *Arrians* (as he is pleas'd to call it) that condemn'd *Athanasius* and denied the Divinity of Christ:

"and therefore were no more to be call'd

"Christians, then *Abrahamists* or *Davidists*.

To this I shall return no other Answer but these following Questions.

1. Whether it is not probable that this great meeting of the *Arrians* might not rather be call'd a club of them pack'd together by the command of *Constantius*, who was wheedled into that party, then to be thought a general Council rightly call'd and ordered? to which all parties ought to be summoned and to be heard freely to speak their sense and opinions in any Debate. Which let the Author prove

prove (if he can) was observed in this Council.

2. Whether or no the grand controversie there decreed, viz. that *ὁμοούσιος* & not *ὁμοιούσιος* should be put into the Creed, did amount to a denial of Christs Divinity? For I do not see but that they might believe that Christ was God, though they could not determine the manner of his Divine Essence, and his procession from the Father; As our Church doth agree in the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament, though we profess not to know the manner of it.

But however, I appeal to this Gentleman himself, whether or no this did amount to a denial of Christ? and desire to know of him, whether or no the *Arrians* did believe, or profess to believe that *Abraham* or *David* was sent by God into the world to make satisfaction for the sins of mankind, and to preach the Christian Law to the world; or whether they did deny Christs satisfaction and the Christian Law? If they did deny neither of these, then they cannot be said to be *Abrahamists* or *Davidists* as well as Christians; neither is it possible for them to exalt any other Prophet above Christ (as he saith they might) if they did acknowledge Christ onely, to be their Lawgiver and Redeemer.

As for the 3. Council of Nice, that established the worshipping of Images, it may also

also be enquired whether that was a lawful General Council or onely a Conventicle of the Popes Creatures? And whether (as they had since to *Trent*) the Holy Ghost was not sent them from *Rome* in a Cloak-bag by which they governed all their Transactions?

If so, then it was no General Council: and therefore makes nothing against the Authority of a General Council rightly call'd and qualified; which may with good Reason be supposed to be guided in all their Sanctions by God's Holy, blessed, all-wise, and immaculate Spirit.

But Secondly, If we could suppose that this was a lawful General Council, yet if this Gentleman would but consult the Records of it, and not onely invent notions of it from his own phantasie; he should find by the Reasons that are there given for the use of Images in the Worship of God, and by the particular Images which they decreed to be set up, *viz.* no other but of Christ, the *Virgin-Mary*, the Apostles and Christian Saints and Martyrs, that it was not possible for them to have fallen into a denial of Christianity thereby.

Nay, so far were they from it, that the main Reason that is given for the use of Images is, that they might be as Books to the ignorant to instruct them in the main Articles of the Christian Religion; and might encourage them to suffer Martyrdom for it, by the so many Ex-

amples

amples of those that had gone before them, which they daily beheld and adored.

But it may be our Author thinks it enough for him with his grateful Friends the Quakers to consult the Light within him, and to throw away all Books but his own.

Now by what I have said in answer to this Author, it is evident that it is so far from being true, that General Councils may equally lead men to a denial of Christ, as every mans private Reason, that this Author is not able to instance in any one General Council (or any thing like a General Council) that ever gave the world so much as a possibility of it in any of their Canons and Decrees. Whereas all the Apostates that ever were in the world, had some Reason or other which they followed, or else something that they thought a Reason, for deserting Christianity. So unsafe and dangerous is it to follow our own Reasons (which are so easily and damnably mistaken) in opposition to the Universal Church.

But what doth he tell us of the Church of England, of these Councils of *Ariminum*, and the $\frac{2}{3}$ of *Nice*? For these were never acknowledged to be General Councils of any Son of our Church. Let him (if he can) charge the four first general Councils (according to which our Reformation was carried on) with the least of Errours. Which, if he cannot do, then those Councils must remain a safer Rule for

for us and all men, then every mans particular Reason.

The Third Principle he examines, is the Tradition of the former and present Ages.

To this our Author saith, That " what those Traditions were of the former, or what are the Commands of the present Church, are no ways to be known but by trusting some number of men present, which is not without the possibility of being misguided, &c..

But what then? Is not the same difficulty applicable to all History whatsoever? and yet he that will give an account of former Times, must not invent it out of his own Humane Reason, but must consult Historians for it.

But then (saith this Gentleman) this is to fall into that opinion you condemn in me. No surely, no man is so foolish to condemn the use of our own Reason in reading History so far as to judge of the true meaning of the words: all that can be condemned by any man of common sense (is that which I apprehend our Author would wheadle into other men, though he cannot be so much a fool to follow it himself) viz. the relying on our naked reason so far as to exclude other more necessary helps; especially in such matters (as these of History) concerning which Reason alone

alone can be no competent judge.

But yet this Gentleman is so confident positively to affirm, *pag. 26.* that " They that build
" their Faith upon past or present Ages, are
" in much greater danger of being drawn from
" the Christian Faith, than those who remit
" the judgment of these things wholly to their
" own Reason. Whereas if he had considered
things aright, he must needs have seen that the
main cause why our Reason will dictate to us
that Christianity is the true Religion, must be
from the constant Tradition of the former Ages
of the Church. For from hence it is that we be-
lieve the Gospel to be the Writings of the Ap-
ostles; from hence it is that we believe the
Historical part of it, and by consequence from
hence it must proceed that we believe the Do-
ctrines contain'd in it.

But let us hear his Reason for this bold Asser-
tion, it is nothing else but this, That " there
" hath been the Authority of an hundred to
" one against Christianity, and that back'd
" with the Universal Agreement of three thou-
" sand years before. Certainly it is not possible
for him to believe that this is any thing of a sa-
tisfactory Argument. For did ever any body
reckon the Tradition of the Heathens and Jews
for the ground of the Christian Faith? Does
he not know that by Tradition every Christian
(that knows what he saith) means the Tradi-
tion of the Church of Christ? Can this then be
any

any Reason against it, that the Heathens and Jews did not assert it ?

I am altogether of his Opinion, that Reason will demonstrate the Christian above any other Religion ; but still the Authority of the Christian Church, together with the Gospel must acquaint us what Christianity is, otherwise meer Reason could never know it. So that let Reason alone, though it be never so well followed with constancy, diligence, and sobriety, it can demonstrate nothing of Christianity if it is not back'd with the Authority of the Church.

Now I appeal to the Author himself to know, how it is possible that the Universal Tradition of the Christian Church should lead us into such Errours, as should cause us to deny Christ ? Was there ever any Age of Christians which did generally fall into the denial of Christ ? How could they then be called Christians who renounc'd the very Essence of Christianity ?

Now because this Author hath not told us what Helps and Directions a Christian must make use of to inform his Reason in matters of Religion, I shall lay him down such a Rule as can never fail him in his main end, his future happiness ; unless he be false to his Rule. The Rule in General is this :

The

on The Scriptures rightly interpreted
 To the interpretation of which, is necessary a due meditation and apprehension of the scope and coherence of the words, with a knowledge of the Original Languages and the peculiar Idioms of them, together with the knowledge of the Customs of those times and places in which these things were done, spoken and written; which makes all Judaick and Ecclesiastical Authors, especially Historians to be very requisite: especially as to the understanding the New Testament. For many things are but cursorily mentioned in the Gospel; and therefore are best explained by the Writings of those that were conversant with the Apostles and their Successors, who did converse with them, and so on, which calls in the assistance of all Antiquity, especially the ancient Fathers of the three first Centuries, and the four first General Councils; and after all, a sound rational Soul, as necessary to lay these together where they agree, and to judge which is most to be relied on where they differ, and to draw well grounded consequences from them, together with the Divine assistance concurring with all these means: so that the common people that have not these advantages (though they may have as good and sound rational Faculties as the greatest Scholars, and can exercise them as judiciously in other things, in which they have had conveni-

ence rightly to inform themselves) are no more fit to interpret Scripture, then they are to Comment on *Euclid*, or *Archimedes*. For that they have not those Helps which are necessary for such a Work.

But what then must they do? they must use the best means that God hath given them (i.e.) the Directions of the Church, and of those Persons, whom the Church hath by Gods Commission ordained over them to be their Guides and Instructors.

And though perhaps by their Guides unskilfulness, or the corruption of the Church they are Members of, (though this last cannot be supposed in the Church of *England*, because it is free from all corruption in Doctrine) they may be led into Errours; yet since they have made use of the best means God hath given them he doth not require impossibilities at their hands; and therefore will not impute those Errours to their Faults, which he hath never given them power to help.

Whereas on the contrary, if every one of the common people must be left wholly to the guidance of his own Reason, they must necessarily run into as many Religions as there are men, and worship a several Deity, not onely every day of the week, but every hour of the day: and by thinking themselves as wise as their Teachers come to despise and condemn them, and to trample under foot all Order

der and Decency, to scorn the Laws of their Magistrates; and in a word, to run themselves into all confusion, danger, and wickedness.

- This some men see well enough to be the natural consequence of this Opinion; and therefore they who have a mind to make divisions amongst us, do nothing else but cry up Conscience and every mans own Reason. For if they can but thus separate the Sheep from the Shepherds, they will soon make them stray so far till they get them into their own Pound.

I These are the mighty advantages that the most of men would obtain by following no other Guide but their own Reason.

- The next advantage of his Opinion, is the great charitableness of it, viz. That

It sets the Gate of Heaven so wide open,
" that all persons whatsoever may enter.

This is Charity indeed with a Witness; to fill Heaven like Noah's Ark with all sorts of Beasts both clean and unclean.

But I am afraid there's something else in the case besides altogether Charity, that prompts the Author to this Opinion; he tells us so himself, and therefore we may believe him, that the humble consideration of his own weakness was another strong motive to him. It seems the Gentleman begins to think, that if there be no entrance into Heaven for Jews, Turks, Heathens and Atheists, he himself shall

shall scarce ever come there.

As for his Opinion, that all these are in an equal possibility of salvation with the unerring Christian: certainly never any man that call'd himself by that name, did ever go about to defend it before this Author; especially as to the latter of them the Atheist. However I will give his cause a fair hearing according to the Christian Law, and leave it to the Readers to give in the Verdict.

As for the Jews and Heathens: though I dare not say they are damn'd, because I do not know what allowance God (of his mercy, through Christs satisfaction for the sins of the whole world) may make for those insuperable prejudices that they labour under, yet certainly they can never be in an equal capacity of salvation with the unerring Christian.

First, Because the Heathens have no certain Guide, onely a probable Rule to walk by, that must lead them to Happiness.

Secondly, Both Jews and Heathens want those Divine and excellent Examples, and those infinite obligations which Christianity affords us to bind us to our Duty.

Thirdly, They want the certainty and clear revelation of eternal rewards and punishments to affright and perswade them to their duty, & to baffle all temptations that they might meet with to draw them from it. For there is no Religion in the whole world that doth so clearly

ly and certainly discover a future Immortality as this which our Saviour Jesus Christ hath given us. For he hath brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel. He then that considers the meer reason of the thing, can never conclude that they are in an equal possibility of salvation with the Christian; much less with the unerring Christian as our Author hath said; because they want those helps which Christians have. I shall not further examine this by my own reason, but had rather (as becomes a Christian that useth sometimes to consult the Scripture as well as *Humane Reason*) to leave them to the judgment of God, and to acquiesce in the determination of St. Paul, *Rom. 2. v. 13.* to the 17. where he saith (I think as plainly as words can expresse) that they shall be wholly condemn'd or acquitted by their own conscience. For they that have no Law are a Law unto themselves, &c. their consciences bearing witness, and their thoughts in the mean while accusing or else excusing one another, In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.

But whatever may become of them, sure I am that we that have had all the advantages that can possibly be given to men to make us good Christians, (being brought up from our cradles in the best constituted Christian Church in the world) if we should Apostatize, can have no hope of salvation remaining for us.

For if we will believe St. Peter. Acts 4. v. 11, 12. There is no other Name given amongst men by which we can be saved. For if it holds against any, it must against us, who have been baptized into that Name.

For St. Paul tells us, Heb. 10. from v. 26, to the 30. That if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversary. And that the Apostle there means that particular sin of Apostacy is evident from the following words. He that despised Moses his Law died without mercy, of how much sorer punishment (think you) shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Now let every one that calls himself Christian, choose whether he will believe the Apostles or this Gentleman.

As for the latter that Atheists too are equally capacitated to salvation as the unerring Christian, which he affirms, p. 30.

For having proposed the Question in these words.

“What then shall we believe Turks, Jews,
 “Heathens and Atheists in an equal possibility of salvation with the unerring Christian?
 He

He no where denies it, but endeavours all that ever he can to defend it; as in his following discourse.

“Because there are a thousand accidents,
“that hinder the greatest part of the world
“from a fair proposal of the Principles of
“Christianity; therefore so small a part of
“mankind hath submitted to the Christian
“Faith.

What then? therefore they may be saved.
No; for this doth not directly follow; for
God hath no where promised that he will ac-
cept of Christs Merits for them; nor apply
them to them: and we cannot but know that
since they are left to the sentence of their own
conscience, there are few men whose consci-
ences will not condemn them of gross and
wilful sins; and therefore shall rather accule
them then excuse them in the day of the Lord
Jesus. So that here is but a small probabi-
lity left of the salvation of most of them, even
by this Author's own Reason which he gives
us (p. 33.) because they have deserted them-
selves, that is their own Reason as well as
God.

But however the disadvantages they labour
under, may in a great part excuse them that
are without; there can be no excuse to those
that are within (i. e.) to us here in Eng-
land, who labour under none of their disad-
vantages.

And if the Apostate amongst us can have no excuse, then surely the Atheist much less. For he cannot plead that he did not know God. For he can turn his eyes no where, but he beholds something or other whose frame is so admirable, that it proclaims its Author to be infinitely wise and powerful; For the Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament shows his handy-work. And that Argument of Lactantius, is impossible to be answered, viz. (*de Fals. Rel. lib. 1, c. 2.*) "No man can be so rude and brutish, but when he looks up into Heaven, must necessarily know that there is a Divine Providence which governs it, and did at first create it, from the immense Greatness, the constant Motion, the All-wise Order, the never-failing Constancy, the never enough admired Benefits, and the amazing beauty of the things he beholds. For it cannot possibly be, but that which shows an admirable wisdom in its contrivance, should demonstrate a greater wisdom in him who made it."

So that no man that hath any eyes in his head, or any sense of the frame of his own body, or any consideration of that Principle by which it acts, can have any possible excuse for his ignorance of the being of a God.

For what he saith further in excuse for the Atheist, p. 36. It may alleviate the crime of an Infidel, but it can abate nothing of the guilt of

of an Atheist. For he cannot pretend that he never heard of God. For the Heavens and the Earth do daily proclaim him. Neither can he pretend that he cannot bring his conscience to assent to it, since it is the natural dictate of all-mankind. But let our Author pretend what he can to the contrary, he that will believe the Apostle St. Paul, Rom. 1. v. 19, 20. must be fully satisfied as to this point, that there can be no excuse for Atheists. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewn it to them. For the invisible things of him are clearly seen from the Creation of the world by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and God-head. From whence the Apostle concludes, so that they are left without excuse. But it is no matter with our Author what the Apostle saith. For his Guide (*i. e.*) his Reason tells him that Jews, Turks, Heathens, and Atheists are in an equal possibility of salvation with the unerring Christian.

Now I may appeal even to this Author himself, whether I have done him any wrong in comparing his Book with *Fiat Lux*, since it is so plainly apparent by his words, that his Design is (if not the same) much worse than the Design of that Book. For who would have gone about to defend such a Question (in a tract so exactly fitted for the reading of the common people) that had not

a Design to wheedle them into an indifferency in all matters of Religion, and even to Atheism it self? But surely if they have any consideration left in them, this very discourse would be enough to make them mistrustful and fearful of such a Guide which may be so easily mistaken as this of *Human Reason*; and when it is mistaken, does so easily lead them into the most damnable of all Errours, even into the contempt of all Religion.

But now we see (by this Author) what kind of Animals they are who are Factors for Rome and a Toleration, and by what excellent means they carry on their Design, viz. by first perswading men to Atheism, by an indifferency in all Religion.

From whence I cannot but take an occasion to remind our Dissenters how much they promote Popery, and destroy Christianity by joyning with the Papists, and the debauchees of our Nation in promoting a toleration: and our Governours that if they think of keeping their Necks from the Roman Yoke, they must then maintain the established Religion of the Church in its true Christian practice and Primitive Discipline. For how much Atheism and an Universal neglect of all Religion, hath increased since our Laws have been laid to sleep, he must be stark blind that doth not see!

To our Author I shall onely add this, That I am sorry with all my heart that a person of his

his Parts and Reason should give any Occasion to be thought a Favourer of Atheism. For who can think that he is not very much a well-willer to Atheists, who endeavours to prove that they are in an equal possibility of salvation with the unerring Christian? It may be he may think to shift off this just suspicion of Atheism by the help of his Parenthesis, *viz.* (if there be any such) For who can suspect him to be an Atheist, or a Favourer of them who scarce supposeth that there can be any such men as Atheists in the world? But we know every Animal will most strive to defend that part which is sore, and will winch and kick when any thing comes near it.

The Fifth Object, which our Author would shake off, is that of Schism. "Which (saith he) is the ordinary railing word in all Controversies and a slander, &c."

Is there then (good Sir) no such thing as Schism, because that word is often abused and misapplied? you might (if you had pleas'd) as well have said there is no such thing as Humane Reason, because your Book hath abused and misapplied those words, to countenance your Errors.

Are all Schismaticks to be excused, because some have been slander'd with that Title? As well may all Thieves and Murderers be excused, because some have been slandered and falsely accused of those Crimes. It

It will be then necessary to know who Schismatics are; and the danger they run themselves and draw others into; and then we shall see what an absolute necessity there is to put a stop to them, both for their own good and the good of the Church.

The First this Gentleman tells us himself, p. 37. "They are truly guilty of Schism (the word it self bearing witness against them) who break the precious Unity of the Christian Church.

They therefore that break the Unity of the Christian Church either by enjoining new Articles of Faith, or things sinful in their practise contrary to the Doctrine and Practise of the Universal Church in its Primitive purity, are guilty of Schism, as the Romanists are, who (amongst the rest which are many more) enjoin the Belief of Transubstantiation as an Article of Faith, which was never heard of in the Christian Church for many hundred years, and the worshipping the Host as the consequence of that Doctrine, together with Prayers to Saints, and the half Communion, &c. which are practises no less sinful and novel then the former Doctrine.

Secondly, They are Schismatics who separate from that particular Christian Church into which they were baptized, when it commands nothing that is sinful in it self; as all those are who separate from the Church of England.

For

For they can never excuse themselves from Schism, unless they can prove (which I challenge them to do if they can) that our Church enjoyns them any thing that is a sin: but neither would this excuse them from communicating with her in things lawful that are commanded by both their temporal as well as their spiritual Governours.

Now that Schism is a very heinous sin is most evident, because it is a breach of all those commands of the Gospel that enjoyn us Peace and Unity, then which I scarce know any more frequently repeated in the New Testament: and it will be most evident from the words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 3. 4. For there the Apostle saith, that Schismaticks are carnal: For (saith he) while one saith, I am of Paul, another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? By which interrogation he doth most strongly affirm it, and make themselves the Judges in that Case against themselves. From whence we may thus argue, That if the Apostle saith, that the *Corinthians* were carnal for dividing themselves into Factions, and espousing particular Names and Parties (though they chose no other persons then himself and Cephas, and Apollos) then those that divide the Church into Parties, and espouse particular Names and Persons in opposition to the Church of God, into which they were baptized, and set up a Church within a Church, and

par-

particular ways of publick worship contradictory to those that are enjoy'd by that Church, of which they are Members (without any just cause of separation from her) are guilty of carnality by the judgment of the Apostle *St. Paul*, whatsoever their pretensions are of piety in themselves, or of powerfulness and godliness in their Teachers. And the greatness of the sin of these persons doth appear in that the Apostle calls them carnal; since the same Apostle (*Rom. 8. 6, 7.*) makes any carnal sin to be mortal and damnable. For to be carnally minded is death, and the Reason he gives sufficiently backs it, for the carnal mind is enmity against God, &c.

Nay from Reason it self, I think that saying of *St. Cyprian* (*de Unit. Eccles.*) that the Schismaticks sin is greater then the Apostates, may be made more then probable. For a sin is so much the greater by how much more mischief it does to the Church of God. Now the Schismatick may do more mischief to the Church of God by drawing numbers of well-meaning Christians after him, then the Apostate can. For all that are sincere Christians will avoid the latter, who cannot have such plausible and fair pretences for his renouncing the Christian Religion, as the other may have for his Divisions.

Let me now ask this Gentleman whether Schism is nothing else but an ordinary railing word?

word in all Controversies: But our Author will shift for one, I'll warrant him: his old Plaister of an erroneous conscience will presently cure this sore; but he values not that, he hath a trick worth ten of it: and that is this Assertion, viz.

“ That the Unity of the Church is not broken by them who differ in Opinions; but by them who will not allow of such a difference.

If the Author means only a difference in Opinions in mens own minds, that never shows it self by any different action from the Church, I know no body will oppose him in this Assertion. But if he means such a difference of Opinions as do disturb the publick exercise of Religion, by drawing others away from it, then he must charge the Apostle with Schism; for according to this Assertion how St. Paul will quit himself from Schism, I cannot tell; for he no where allows of such a difference in Opinions, but doth with most earnest zeal, exhort against Divisions, and condemns them and their Authors as the most dangerous crimes and persons: and yet who would ever have thought the Apostle a Schismatick? It is a little to be admired that St. Paul should so passionately exhort us to peace and unity, and yet that he himself should break the Unity of the Church. Again, this Assertion is altogether,

ther new and senseless, and just such another as this, That,

The Unity of a Family is not broken by the malepertness and obstinacy of those Servants and Children, that will not obey and submit to the Orders in it, but will set up Orders for themselves ; no, by no means but onely by the pride and peevishness of the Master of the Family, who will force them to observe his Orders, and will not let them alone to do what they please.

For the future therefore, let Governours of Societies and Masters of Families learn of this Author to give all their Subjects and Servants a free toleration to follow their own inventions, lest they be guilty of breaking the precious unity of their Societies and Families.

Would it not be a brave world would they all but follow this advice ? Oh what an admirable peace and harmony would then bless us !

Yet this is the natural consequence of this Gentlemans Doctrine. For however he talks onely of a liberty of Opinions, this is but a copy of his countenance ; for it is a liberty of practise according to those Opinions that he pleads for ; as most manifestly appears by his following Discourse. For thus he argues, p. 37.

“ Who knows whether that God who
 “ liked best that no mans body should have
 “ the same complexion, &c. may not as
 well

"well be pleased with variety in his worship and adoration?"

I answer, Every body knows it that knows any thing of the Christian Religion. Since we know that the Apostle prays that we may all glorifie God with one heart, and with one mouth (*Rom. 15. 6.*) we must know that it is Gods will that such an Unity should be preserved in his worship. Since the Apostle beseeches as well as commands us to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of peace, (*Ephes. 4. 2.*) and to walk by the same Rule, and to mind the same thing (*Phil. 3. 16.*) and that all things be done in decency and in order, and to edification (which is impossible without Unity) we must then necessarily know that he is not pleas'd with variety in his worship, as he is in the variety of his works: and that therefore an orderly and uniform way of worship is expected, because we have commands of that nature.

But if this trick will not do, the Author will show you another as good, *viz.* "That the Rule which God hath given us is capable of various interpretations, whereas God might have made them (if he had pleas'd) as plain to every man in one sence, as now they are to every man in his own. But how do we know that, I beseech you Sir? How could God have made them so? unless he had unmade man, and had made him an Angel incapable

capable of the least of errors. But what if the rule be capable of various interpretations and of all the three senses he cites the Divines for? What's this to his purpose? Oh surely (quoth our Author) very much, for then we have no uniform commands, and consequently there can be none necessary of an uniform worship.

But Sir, (I must tell you freely) that you have as bad luck in consequences in this Book, as I have ordinarily met withall. For Sir, may not, nay ought not the commands of God concerning his worship, be interpreted in the literal sense; when they are so plain as nothing can be more plainly expressed according to the letter of them? What need any body have recourse to the typical and Anagogical sense of those words of the Apostles, Let all things be done in decency and order and to edification, when they are so plain and perspicuous in the literal; and so hardly admit of any other, that I believe it would a little trouble our Author, as well as all his Divines, to fix any typical or Anagogical sense upon them?

How then can this person have the confidence to insinuate by little similitudes, that the commands of God are as well obeyed by the various expressions of our adorations of him, as the sun is obeyed by the contrary effects it hath upon the mud and wax, &c. (for this he must mean by all that discourse, or else it is nothing to the purpose) when he must know,

(if he believe the Gospel) that God hath revealed to us that it is his will, that we should glorifie him with one heart and with one mouth?

But perhaps this Gentleman thinks he knows better how to worship God, then God knows how to direct him. Oh the more then Divinity of *Humane Reason* that guides a man to think himself wiser than God Almighty! but our Author hath more of the same sort of similes, which are his grand Arguments, p. 40.

“The Unity of the Church of God is not compared to the Unity of one man: but to the Unity of man and woman joyned in marriage. Now this Unity is of one part more weak then the other; and the female part in the similitude is the erring part in the Church, which is to be accounted one and the same with the other by the bond of Charity.

Now what a fool was I? for I durst have sworn that the Apostle St. Paul doth compare the Unity of the Church to the unity of the same body and its members, 1 Cor. 12. v. 12. to the end of the chapter, and this now in spight of *Humane Reason*, I must believe to be the unity of one man.

But if we let that pass, what would our Author have from all this similitude? Upon my reputation I don't know. I wish he would tell me where he lives in his next Book, that I might

might wait upon his Worship, to know his Pleasure in it; for by what he hath here said, I can onely guess at it. But I suppose his drift is this; That by vertue of this similitude it appears, that the erring part of the Church (though it be in actual and wilfull errors) is still a Member of the Church, and therefore not guilty of Schism. But I am very much mistaken if I cannot convince any rational man of the quite contrary, and that from the very same similitude.

For, suppose the erring part in the Metaphor, *viz.* the Wife should erre and stray from her Husbands bed to another Mans, and should therefore be divorced from her Husband; who then (Sir) do you think would be guilty of the breach of the Unity in Marriage, the Man, or his Wife? If you must be forced to say the Wife is guilty of it; would not the same thing hold in the erring part of the Church, *viz.* That if any shall wilfully run away from the Church, and disobey its Laws, and Unite its self to a quite contrary Assembly, that if he be Excommunicated for it, it is his own fault, and therefore he is guilty of the Schism, and not the Church?

I am almost quite tir'd with his Similitudes, his whole Book consists so of them, as one would think he never aim'd at solid Arguments, but onely at something like Arguments. For nothing can be prov'd by a Similitude:
they

they are at best but good Explications, but no Demonstrations: But how ever, I must follow him.

To make short work therefore with the rest of them taken from the Members of the Body (which by the by I apprehend to be the Unity of one Man, though our Author but just now told us, that the Unity of the Church is not compar'd to the Unity of one Man) the sum of all these Similitudes is nothing more then this: that if any Member of the Body be dead, or gangreen'd, or hath any infectious distemper that may indanger the rest of the body, if it be not to be cured, it must be cut off: but if they be small distempers (as the Itch) though very infectious, yet we will rather indure scratching the Itchy part, then cut it off.

But what's the Reason I pray you Sir? is it not because it may be otherwise cured, and because if a Member be cut off from the Body, it cannot be set on again, and so the whole is thereby at a loss for it?

Now apply this to the Church, and see what our Author will get by it. Thus: if any Member of the Church be dangerously hurtfull to the rest, by gross and scandalous crimes, it is to be cut off from it by Excommunication: but if the fault be small, and not dangerous to the Church, it is to be born withall: but if the fault be never so small, if it be very catching and dangerous to the Peace of the Church (as the

the itch of Disputing and Writing against the Churches Authority is in these times we live in) such a Member ought to be cut off. For though what he saith may be but little and very little to the purpose (as this Author's Book is) yet because the contempt of Authority is a very great crime, and one of the most dangerous and infectious of this age, therefore such a Member (our Authors own Similitudes prove) ought not to be spared: so that let the crime be never so small, if it be accompanied with contumacy, the person deserves Excommunication for it. Neither is the danger of losing a Member sufficient to restrain the sentence. For it is not in the Body of the Church as in our natural Bodies, that the Member is quite lost when it is once cut off, because it cannot be joyned again.

For the Church after it hath cured the Member that was cut off, can restore it again safe and sound to the same place it had before.

From whence we may see how deceitfull a way it is to argue from Similitudes. Wherefore this Gentleman must pardon me if I tell him that I cannot but suspect a design of deceit in that Author, whose most common Arguments are Metaphors.

“Sixthly, The next Object against him, he saith p. 44. Is Pride and Vanity.

This he casts off with so much contempt and scorn

Scorn that he thinks (he saith) if he had not a great deal of humility he should not daign to answer it. But suppose after all this he should fall of an answer to it. (as he hath to all the rest of the Objections) who then would ever believe confidence hereafter for his sake? Now if he doth not fall in it, I am sure I am deceived. For his way of answering it is meer Sophistry, by comparing the extreames of both sides, as though there was no difference at all, but onely in the two opposite extreames. But (I beseech you Sir,) Is there no difference in *Humane Reason*, betwixt *staring* and *staring* made does not true modesty and humility consist in a mean betwixt the extreames, as other vertues do? Might he not as well argue, that because it is a folly to starve ones self, that therefore it is wisdom to be a glutton and a drunkard: or that because it is sedition to pay Authority obedience in nothing at all, or not in indifferent things, that therefore every good subject must pay an actual and blind obedience to every thing his Magistrate commands him, though it be never so wicked and abominable?

Would not this be a very rational way of arguing? and is not this of our Author's exactly like it, if not the very same with it?

For whatsoever his words are, his meaning must be this (or else his discourse makes nothing to his purpose) that because it is pride and tyranny to endeavour to enslave all mens

understandings by our own, that therefore it is humility to be governed onely by our own phantasies. Or that because it is a great crime in us Christians to damn all others that are not of our Opinion, that therefore we are bound to cast away all Laws, and let every man run on in his own inventions, and give a general toleration to Papists, Jews, Turks, Heathens, and Atheists.

Or lastly, because it is arrogancy in us to hold an opinion, when cause shall appear to the contrary, that therefore it is humility in us to hold to nothing at all, but to be like a wave of the sea tossed with every wind of Doctrine.

I appeal to any man living, whether he doth not think him more humble, who submits to the Judgement of his Magistrates in all indifferent things (which is all that the Church of England requires) then he that is dogmatical in his own opinions about them, and onely rests satisfied (according to our Authors meek and humble Doctrine) in the sole dictates of his own *Humane Reason*?

And now, who does not admire our Authors great humility in vouchsafing an answer to this argument?

But these are the common Objections. Now follows the extraordinary one, objected by extraordinary Mr Hobbes: He that pleaseth may read it p. 46. for I am not at leisure to transcribe it.

The

The Seventh Object. is that of T. H.

The sum of which is this : " That because
 " all publick worship of God consists in
 " outward significations of our honour of
 " him, different ways of worship must needs
 " be scandalous to others in making them
 " think that we dishonour God instead of
 " honouring him.

But this Gentleman dissents from him. What
 pity it is that two such extraordinary Friends
 should fall out ?

But let us see the Reason why he will con-
 tradict his old Master ; and this it is.

" For the same Argument would as well
 " hold against the diverse ways of worship
 " in several Commonwealths as in the same,
 " because none would be spectators of the
 " worship, but such as believe it Honoura-
 " ble ; for were there an hundred several
 " Religions in the same City, still their
 " Religious Congregations would be made
 " up of none but those of the same Opinion.

I shall undertake to defend T. H. in his
 Assertion, not for any extraordinary opinion I
 have of the Man or his Argument, but because
 I believe he speaks truth in it ; and therefore
 I think it hard that he which speaketh truth
 so very seldom should be run down with meer
 words or metaphors when he doth : but chiefly
 because our Author through him strikes at the
 injunctions of our Church and our Uniform

and decent Ceremonies in the worship of God.

But do you think (Sir) that men of the same City would be as much strangers to the Religions of their next neighbours, as they are to those of forraign Nations? Certainly I should think that it was much easier for them to go a few steps to satisfy their curiosity, then to cross the seas for it: and would not their trade and interest one amongst another in the same town more oblige them to a religious interview, then when they were at some hundreds of miles distance, and had little or no concerns that should draw them thither? Most probable it is, that to carry on a trade with all sorts of men, some would so far comply with all sorts of Religions, to go to all their publick Assemblies, since they might do it without giving themselves the trouble of going further, then the limits of their own walls. So that the case is much different which our Author would make the very same.

But our Author hath more Arguments then one, and more Answers too, or else he was in a poor case. He adds.

“ That those that are for a toleration of all
 “ ways of worship in the same Common-
 “ wealth would not think any of those ways
 “ which differed from their own to be dis-
 “ honourable to God.

But (I beseech you Sir) did they all tell you
 so?

so? or how do you know it, by instinct or new light?

But (Sir) if they had, I know no body is bound to believe them, any more then your self. For I dare be so confident as to assert, that there is scarce any Sect in all *England*, unless they be Atheists, that do in their hearts allow of a toleration of all ways of worship in this Kingdom. Hath not this been made appear by all our grand Separatists? do the Papists allow it where they have power? did the Presbyterian or the Independant allow any such thing when they were uppermost? and have not the Quakers themselves set up a discipline amongst them, which whosoever will not submit to, is presently cast out of the Brotherhood? so that we see our Author will find his own Party very small, when he comes to tell Noses, unless he thinks he might find Atheists and Hypocrites enough amongst all or any of the other Parties.

For otherwise it is absolutely impossible, that any man that is sincere in the choice of his Religion should not think that way of worship which is contrary to his to be less honourable to God then his own (*i. e.*) comparatively dishonourable to him.

For Instance. I do sincerely choose to pray to God publickly on my knees, because I do really believe that this is the most proper way of expressing (before those men I converse withall) that honour which I owe to God Al-

mighty : Now when I see others when they should worship God, set on their tails like *Dogs*, or wallow and loll and grunt and groan like Swine, or stand up and wriggle and make ugly faces and grin and make mows like Apes or Baboons. I must needs confess I cannot for my soul but think their way of worship ridiculous, and contrary to the due expressions of the reverence they owe to the infinite God of Heaven and Earth.

So that this Gentleman must suppose, that all men in our Nation, or the greatest part at least, are meer Atheists or Hypocrites (which no man but he that is one of these himself can possibly suppose) or else that there must arise strange thoughts of one another from their contrarieties in the performance of their Publick Devotion ; and how soon these would break out into Disputes, Contentions , and Feuds, and the Consequences of these Tumults and Seditions, I leave it to any one to judge that is not prejudiced.

But if this Gentleman cannot carry his cause by Reason ; he knows another way still, and that is Railing.

And therefore he sets full drive on the Clergy of the Church of *England* (they being now exposed as the ancient Christians were, amongst the beasts in the Amphitheatres, without any guard but their own generous courage and innocence) he therefore ventures to give them

them the first Essay of his good natur'd and Gentile Doctrine, by very civilly calling them by those most obliging titles of Ignorant or Malicious Physicians.

For that he speaks of them is evident, because there are no other Spiritual Physicians (which he there must mean) but onely they, that do publickly oppose his beloved toleration.

And is this all they have for their reward for setting themselves in the breach against that Flood of Popery and Atheism, which is just ready to overflow our Nation?

Is not this rare encouragement to our Noblemen and Gentlemen, to bestow a thousand or five hundred pounds in the Education of a Son to expose him (when all is done) to be abused by every Buffoon?

Is not our Nation come to a fair pass for Religion, that (though the most barbarous Nations in the whole world have an honour and reverence for their Priests, and always had so) yet that Sacred and Honourable Office amongst Us, must render the Person contemptible? I cannot but be concern'd (as I am a Gentleman, and so I think ought every one that bears that title) to see those who have, many of them by their Birth, all of them by their Education, Degrees, and Orders, merited a just title to the honour of the *English* Gentry; and that Profession which was in all

Ages (before this last) accounted in this Nation the most Honourable of all others, and is so still accounted by our Laws, to be now become so despicable, that he passes for a Wit, that can but cast an affront upon the Professors of it.

For how can our Nobility and Gentry dispose of their younger Sons (unless they will make the *Ottoman* Law to maintain their Families) when the most delightfull, most honourable, and formerly the most usuall way for them, is blocked up by such grand discouragements?

But what's the Reason now why this Gentleman treats them so Gentilely and civilly in the titles and in the faults he casts upon them? onely this, because (like good Shepherds) they will not desert their Flocks which are committed to their care, to be devoured by the subtle Foxes of *Rome*, or by those Wolves the sacrilegious Atheists and Schismatics of *England*.

Thus the Fox and the Woolf (had they this Author's *Humane Reason*, and his way of expressing it) would first endeavour to make the silly Sheep hate their Shepherds, by telling them how malicious they have been to them in restraining them from playing or feeding in what pastures they pleased, and then tell them that if they would follow them, they should have a general liberty of conscience to do what they pleased. But what would be the event
should

Should the Sheep stray from their Shepherds, to go along with these good natur'd guides? would they not all soon be devoured, without any body to help them? and would they not soon find by their sad experience that it had been much better for them to have continued under the restraint of their old plain honest Shepherds, then to have enjoyed for a few minutes their liberty which their new masters flattered them withall, on purpose that they might devour them? aye but (saith this sweet-natured Gentleman) they might by Writing, Disputing, Preaching, and Living, &c. reduce the World in a short time to its ancient, healthfull and natural temper. If the Author means the ancient and healthfull temper of Popery, or the pure natural temper of Heathenism, I am very much of his opinion, that (if toleration be once set up) the World will in a short time be reduced to one of these.

For let the Clergy do what they could by writing, preaching, and living, &c. were they not defended by Laws, and the Nation guarded from those swarms of Caterpillars that would be sent from Rome to devour our Nation, I mean Priests and Friars to convert souls to pay he old Gentlemans *Peter-pence*, and the rest of *St. Peter's* Patrimony, their preaching and disputing would never be heard, but would be quite drown'd with the noise of Papists and other Dissenters; neither would the piety of
 D 4. their

their lives (were they Angels) be taken notice of amongst that croud of pretenders to it ; who would all strive by outward shews of it (especially the Papists by their magnificent processions, and their specious pretences of Miracles which must necessarily take with the common people) to draw all mens eyes from the true English Clergy : unless it were those who were set as Spies over them to discover their faults and to divulge them, nay if they had no faults (which is not to be conceived of meer men) rather then the people should believe them innocent, they would invent stories and lyes enough of them to take away all their reputation.

For this, some of our Sects (especially the Papists) would think themselves bound to do, from the very Principles of their Religion ; the main of which is this, to promote their cause by any means whatsoever. So that this Gentleman may be fully satisfied that without the restraints of Law or else the Sword, it would be impossible to maintain any settlement in Religion, but that we must necessarily be hurried into Popery, Atheism and all Confusion.

Neither let our dissenting Brethren flatter themselves with the hopes that they shall easily run down the Papists with the cry of Antichrist, Superstition, and Idolatry.

For as to the two First, They will easily
re-

retort them upon their accusers, and will raise a far greater cry for themselves of Christian Peace and Unity, of their Church its antiquity, universality, infallibility, and the most inextinguishable Treasure of Charity in her Pardon and Indulgences, by which the people shall be allowed underhand a toleration of all kind of debauchery, so that they will but make a leg to the kind old Doctor of St. Peter's Chair: And as for Idolatry, they will easily answer that by the effects of divisions in the words of St. Paul, *Rom. 2. 21, 22. Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacrilege?*

There can be then but one way that can possibly preserve us from Popery, without the present execution of our Laws, and that is a standing Army: but I believe most true English Gentlemen will think this Remedy little better then the Disease.

If it shall be answered that the Laws might be executed against Papists, but a Liberty allowed to all others: I answer, First, that this is very unequitable and severe; that those persons who suffered most of any (except those of the Church of *England*) for his Majesties Cause, should now he is return'd, be the onely Sufferers.

Secondly, That were others tolerated, it will be impossible to discover the Papists, who

will hide themselves under their coverings; there being no ready ways of convicting them, but onely this, their not joyning with the Church of *England* in her constant publick Liturgy every Lords day, and in receiving the Sacraments with her three times a year, which can never be consistent with the toleration of all other Religions amongst us.

I refer it therefore (since his Majesty hath commanded the execution of his Laws) to the serious consideration of our Nobles and Gentlemen, whether they will chooise to give themselves the trouble to execute our Laws, and to enjoy their Proprieties under the protection of them; or whether they will turn their throats to the longest Sword; or submit their necks to the *Roman* yoke, which our wise fathers thought too hard for them to bear?

For one of these must be indured, & it will in a short time be past all help to prevent the two latter without a speedy recourse to the former. For if our Sectaries grow more numerous and seditious amongst us, (as they may easily be managed into any thing, and as long as the world hath more knaves then wise men and honest in it, they shall not want managers) they will soon become altogether ungovernable without a Rod of Iron, so that things will soon come to that pass, that no Laws shall be executed upon them without a standing Army to compel them to obedience and submission.

But

But to return to our Author; He proceeds, p. 49. to strike at the root of *Thom. Hobbes* his Argument, by telling him plainly and truly that it is False. Alas, poor old *Thom!* that so extraordinary a Friend of thine should so affront so extraordinary a Person as thou thoughtst thy self! What no other Argument but the Scotch Argument against thee, that ready way of confutation of all Objections, *Bellarmino* thou liest? Certainly if *T. H.* be not dead already, the very sence of this affront would kill him: and would it not grieve our good-natur'd Author to be the death of so extraordinary a Gentleman?

But however, he not onely ventures to say it is false, but endeavours to prove it too, to be false, that the Worship or Honour of God consists in the opinion of others. Why? because "then Idolatry for 4000 years had been the best, nay the onely Religion."

But what doth this make against *T. H.* his Argument? Or what absurdity follows from thence, unless this be one, that the *H. Athens* were Idolaters? and if they were, who can help it? But suppose (saith our Author) I was the onely Christian amongst an whole Nation of Infidels, I ought not to refrain from the Christian worship, which I grant him if he means the private worship of God: no (saith he) nor to hide and disguise it for fear of scandal to the Infidels; but as to concealing it, he

he must pardon me. For I do not conceive why I am bound to throw away my life or estate to do no good, but harm amongst those I converse withal; especially in such a Case as this is, when I can perform my duty in private more suitably to the commands of Christ. For he commands us when we pray to enter into our closet, *Mat. 6.* and he tells us, that God which seeth us in secret shall reward us openly. If I am herein mistaken, I should be glad if you would please (Sir) to give me better information.

But again, He foresees that an obvious Objection would be raised against him from the customs of men, amongst whom a salute contrary to the custom of the place would be accounted an affront; As to put off ones Hat in the East (though I don't know where they wear any Hats amongst the Easterns) and in the West to keep it on before Princes. But (saith this Gentleman) the same reason would not hold as to the worship of God. For God knows the very hearts of men; and therefore needs not judge of them by the outward appearance.

This I confess hath fully answered the Objection, as to the private worship of God. For the liberty of which our Author needs not dispute. For I know none of the Church of *England* will oppose him in it; our Parliament having by their late Act left every one to his liberty in the performance of religious Duties in.

in his own House : But that he argues for, must be a liberty in the publick worship of God ; and this if our Author had considered, would have quite alter'd the Case, and have fully satisfied him that his answer to this Objection is altogether vain and frivolous. For the worship of God admits of a double consideration, if it be barely considered as the worship of God, then it is true that because God knows the thoughts ; the sincerity of our Souls is apparent to him, without any outward expressions at all. But if we consider it as publick, it is the worship of God in such a manner as may not onely be known to God but to men ; and therefore in that we are bound to use such outward Ceremonies (*i. e.* expressions of our reverence) as are publickly known to express and signifie our honour to God, that we practise that of our Saviour, *Mat. 5. Let your Light so shine before men, &c.* therefore as it is a worship of God, it requires our sincere intentions to glorifie him by it ; and as it is publick, it requires that those sincere intentions be expressed by such gestures and ceremonies as are known to express our intentions of honour, not onely to God, but to all men that are present with us.

So that (whatsoever our Author saith to the contrary) it is not false of publick worship (concerning which he knows well enough that *T. H.* there speaks) that it doth consist (so far as it is publick) in the opinions of men.

But

But (ware thy gray pate old *Thom.*) for now he comes with his Similitude (his main strength) that he may at one blow knock down all opposers, the sum of it is this, *viz.*

That "As an Universal Monarch, though
 "he would be willing to propagate his own
 "Language, yet cannot be displeased at him
 "that pays him honour in a different Lan-
 "guage, and would at least pardon that di-
 "versity that consents in his own glory. So,
&c. p. 51. &c.

In good time. But supposing this Emperor had commanded that none should approach his presence, or speak to him, but in his own Language: would it not be a piece of very great humility in a Subject, to come and complement him in a different language (especially when the Language that the supream power had commanded was the natural Tongue of that Subject) do you think he would not have a great deal of reason to pardon the Subject for that affront to his commands? But saith the Subject, I know this command of Yours was impossible for all Your Subjects to obey. Because all men cannot speak that Language you have enjoined: therefore I hope your Majesty will consent to that which tends to your own glory? what answer do you think (Sir,) would be made to such a Subject? would his Emperor think himself obliged to him for his great civility? or would he not ratherwise punish him for his impudence,

prudence, in daring to break his commands before his face ? for (though perhaps those of other Nations could not speak the Language, and so might be excused) yet this can be no excuse to him, whose native language it was supposed to be.

Apply this Similitude to the present business, and see what this Author will gain by making true comparisons.

God hath commanded an Unity and Agreement in his Publick Worship ; the particular Magistrates of our Church and Nation, who are God's Vicegerents, to preserve this Unity ; appoint those Ceremonies that are most expressive of reverence in the place where we live, and no other to be observed in the Publick Worship of God. Now can any Member of our Church pretend any impossibility for not performing this command ? or does he think that this shall excuse him, because it is impossible for all other people of all the nations in the world, that do not know them, to observe those same Ceremonies ?

Or lastly, do we think that he ought to be excused for his contempt of authority, because the different Ceremonies which he used in God's Worship did agree and consent in God's Glory ?

For what he saith (p. 53.) *viz.*

“ That as well may different thoughts represent the Worship of God and his Son
“ Jesus.

" Jesus Christ, as different words can represent the same thought.

I cannot tell what he would have by it. But this I know, take it in the literal sense of it, it is as extravagant an assertion as one can easily meet withall. For different words may signify the same things, because neither the things nor mens notions of things, do alter by the various words or languages in which they are expressed. But it is impossible it should be so in the Worship of God. For the Worship of God being essentially placed in the thoughts, different thoughts must make different Worships. But perhaps this is to be typically or anagogically interpreted.

As for that lash he gives the *Roman Church*, p. 53. The old Gentleman of the infallible Chair may well pardon him for it, since he makes him amends very speedily after, (p. 56.) by drawing in *Henry* the Eighth by the head and shoulders, first to be lashed for his Adultery, and then for deserting his good old friend the Pope.

The last Object. He answers (from p. 54. to p. 62.) Is that by which some would prove him guilty of the Error of the Greeks by several Texts of Scripture.

The Error of the Greeks, I suppose was this. Their following vain and Heathen Philosophy (or meer *Humane Reason*) against the Divine Reve-

Revelation of the Christian Religion, by the Miracles and Preaching of Christ and his Apostles. For from hence was it, that the Doctrine of the Resurrection was derided amongst them, that the Apostles Preaching was thought foolishness, and the Cross, a stumbling-block.

Now I appeal to any judicious and impartial Reader, whether this Author hath not driven on this same, or a worse design in no small part of his Book.

For he hath endeavoured to prove, that a man may be excusable, though he follows his *Humane Reason* to the denial of Christianity, (*i. e.*) in a direct opposition to the Divine Revelation. Nay he hath endeavoured to prove, that Jews, Heathens and Atheists, are in an equal possibility of salvation with the unerring Christian.

Now I desire this Author to prove, that ever the Heathen Greeks had amongst them any question which they did defend more directly contrary to the Christian Religion than His is. Which if he cannot do, he must acknowledge that he hath out-done them all at the wisdom of enticing words, to draw others from Christianity: and that he doth not come far short of them at the wisdom of the flesh, and the wisdom of the Princes of this World, will appear in that he hath so much busied himself to prove, that *Humane Reason* may tolerate Atheism it self, and consequently all kind of
lusts.

lusts and wickedness whatsoever.

Away with you dull Greeks for a company of old fools, that could not improve your reason further, then to the denial of Christ ! meer Gregory-Grey-beards are you all, in comparison of our Author, who can tell you presently how to deny the Being of a God by *Humane Reason*, and to excuse your selves when you have done ; so exquisitely hath he found out a guide to happiness, and so gently hath he followed the directions of his own *Reason*.

The Gentleman in the next place proceeds to establish his Doctrine by positive Arguments.

And his first Argument is from the safety of it, which he endeavours to prove by comparing his guide (*viz.*) every mans own *Reason*, with others that stand in competition with it.

“ As first with the apprehension of a Vision
“ or Revelation extrinsically coming into
“ the Soul. p. 62.

If he means nothing but Enthusiasme hereby, I shall onely leave it to be disputed betwixt him and his gratefull friends the Quakers. For I know no Christian that will follow or expect new lights, since God hath given us the Gospel, a positive law to govern our lives and actions ; and since the Apostle tells us, *Gal. i. 8. That if he, or an Angel from heaven should preach any other Gospel, he ought to be held accursed.*

If he means all revelation in general (even that

that of the Gospel not excepted, as what may not a man venture at, who is indued with his *Humane Reason*, which hath already taught him to excuse Infidelity and Atheism?) I desire him to consider, that since he himself hath proved in the latter end of his Book, that we have Reason enough to believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God ; What strange kind of blasphemous aspersion he must cast upon the Divine Wisdom, if he dares to assert that every mans own Reason is a safer rule to walk by, then that rule which God hath particularly revealed to us from heaven for that purpose. Unless therefore he can think our own Reason more infallible then the Reason of God himself, he must conclude, (if he believes the Gospel to be Gods Word, as he professeth to do) that it is much safer to follow that law which God hath been pleased to give us, then the law of our own Reason. For otherwise the Divine Revelation had been altogether vain and useless.

Secondly, The next guide he endeavours to prove less safe than *Humane Reason*, is Authority. p. 63.

By which he hath not explained what he means, so that by this Discourse (since he hath no ways limited the signification of the word) we may justly judge he intended to set up every man's Reason as a safer guide then all Authority. His reason is this.

“ For if that Authority prescribe truth, we
“ have

“ have good fortune, and meerly good fortune in our obedience.

But I pray you Sir, Are there not many truths that can be no ways made evident (or at least not so evident as is convenient) but by the suffrage of Authority ? as the distinction of persons in the sacred Trinity, the Deity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. For if the universal consent of the Church in these points did not clearly prove, that those Texts of Scripture which are urged for them, were to be so interpreted, it would not perhaps be so easie a matter to stop a subtile Socinians mouth by meer Scripture ; and much less by meer Reason.

If we take Authority in the other common acceptation of the word for lawful power ; the Author's assertion is still worse and much more false. For in all indifferent things and doubtful matters, the Authority of the Magistrate is to prescribe to us, not our own Reason onely : it being much safer for us to follow authority in those cases, then to be guided onely by our selves. So that, Sir, you see by this time that in most actions of our lives (for most of them do concern indifferent things) we have not onely good fortune but good reason in our obedience to authority. Nay in some cases (and those not a few) authority is the onely reason of our assent ; as in all matters of fact, the reason of our belief can be nothing else, but the authority of the witnesses ; and in all matters of history,

ty, the reason of our belief is not so much the reasonableness or credibility of the thing that is related, as the credit and consent of Authors, which is nothing else but Authority; from whence it is that we can prove the truth of the Scriptures themselves: and if so, then surely it was very Christianly said of this Gentleman, that we have onely good fortune in our obedience to authority; for then we have nothing but good fortune for our belief of the Scriptures themselves, since the Reason of it is only grounded on Authority. But he proceeds p. 64.

“ That if it lead us into errour, we have
 “ nothing to plead for our excuse, for we
 “ have nothing to say for our obedience to
 “ that authority.

Who would have thought it? have we nothing to say for our belief of matters of fact and history, if we be deceived in them? have we no excuse for our selves? certainly any body but this Author would allow us a very considerable, nay a full excuse of our errour from the testimony of the witnesses; else our Magistrates are in a very hard case, who are bound to pass sentence, even in cases of life and death, *secundum allegata, & probata (i. e.)* according to evidence, which they have from the witnesses.

But however, he is resolved to prove it from the example of *Eve*, who pleaded the Authority of the Serpent, and yet was punished. Did she

the not deserve it, since he dared to believe the Serpent rather than God himself? Aye but

“ *Adam* too was accursed, because he believed that which was figuratively one with him his wife (as Members of the Church pretend to do the Church,) rather than that which was most certainly and singly one with him, which was his own Reason. p. 64.

What a fine story have we here ? the Author might, if he had pleased, have made short work, and have told us that *Adam* was accursed for believing his wife rather than himself. But then the pretty Simile had not so well brought in the Church, which this Gentleman was resolved to drag in (as *Henry* the Eighth was drawn in just before) by the head and shoulders. For if ever any thing came in impertinently this does : For was there ever any Member of the Church that believed the Church for no other reason, but because it was figuratively one with himself ? if not, to what purpose was this parenthesis of the Church crowded in, in this place ? unless it was to make all his admirers to cast off their obedience to the Church. But if any be hereby perswaded to it, they must be such as are not able to distinguish between Reason and Impertinency. But to let that pass, I wonder who told him that *Adam* was accursed for believing his wife rather than his own Reason ; whoever he was, a Scotch man would call

call him a merry Gentleman, that is in plain *English* a downright liar. For if our Author will believe the authority of *Moses* in the case (*Gen. 3. 17.*) he will find that the reason of his curse is there given to be no other, then because he had broken Gods Command, and had not obeyed his Authority; So that his crime was not that he had believed his Wife rather than his own Reason. For that Law was not a Law of Nature or Reason, but a meer positive Law of God. For (had not God particularly forbid it) it had been for all any reason to the contrary, as lawful for *Adam* to have eaten of that Tree, as of any Tree in all *Eden*: But the cause of his curse was this, that he followed his Wifes example and perswasion rather than the expresse commands and threatnings of God. What does all this make against Authority? since *Adam* was accursed for not obeying the divine Authority. Who would ever believe any Authority after so grand a demonstration against it fetch'd from *Adam's* green-britches?

As for what he saith, p. 65. of blinding our own eyes, &c. I onely desire him to tell me whether he doth believe that we must never follow nor assent to Authority? If he cannot be so ridiculous to belive it, then surely our obedience and assent to Authority where it is necessary (as in most cases of our lives I have already proved it is) is not a blinding our own eyes; and a putting our selves into a greater probability

lity of not finding then of lighting upon the true passage to Heaven, as he would there insinuate? For I must needs tell him, that his Book is nothing else almost but a piece of common sophistry, viz. an universal conclusion from some few particulars, and this managed by hiding himself in general and ambiguous terms, little similes, and sly insinuations exactly fitted to deceive the vulgar, and thereby to destroy all Peace and Unity in the Church, by making them have so high an opinion of their own Reasons, that is of themselves (to which they are naturally prone enough; for the Fool is wisest in his own eyes) that they shall soon scorn and condemn all Authority whatsoever, which he endeavours to insinuate by the advantage of safety on the contrary part, p. 65. "Now contrariwise (saith he) "they that are guided by their own understanding if they commit themselves wholly "to it) are as safe on the left hand as on the "right, as secure of happiness in their Errours "as others are in the Truths they happen to fall "into.

Hath he not now discovered most apparently what he means by his *Humane Reason*? Is it not the very same with *Ralpho's New-light*?

*For as of Vagbonds we say,
That they are ne'r besides their way;
What e'r men speak by this New-light,
Still they are sure to be i'th' right;*

Sup-

Suppose then that any one should commit himself so wholly to his understanding, that he should by the Errors of it be led into theft, murder, rebellion, schism, heresie, infidelity and Atheism it self, would not this man hereby, think you, be in a very safe condition? and would not God Almighty at the great day of judgment be very well satisfied for the commission of all these crimes, with this answer, that the man did wholly commit himself to the guidance of his own understanding? or rather would not his own conscience tell him that he ought to have been better inform'd? and that he might have been so if he had not been so self-conceited of his own opinions.

Did ever any man but this Author make such use of his *Humane Reason* to countenance all the villanies in the world? For what mischief is there so great that a man may not be led into by committing himself wholly to the guidance of his own understanding, if it be not beforehand rightly inform'd and instructed? Now should we not have a blessed world were men as secure in these Errours that might lead them into all these villanies before mentioned, as others are in their Truths? But further, Should a man chance to prove, that in most Cases of our lives we are secure, if we follow Authority, though we may err thereby; nay, though we err contrary to our own Reason: & that on the other hand, if we err by following

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our own Reason against Authority, we are clearly left without excuse for our presumption. How then? what would become of the grand security our Author saith every man hath in being guided by his own understanding? Would it not thence be clearly proved, that Authority is a much safer Guide in those things than every mans own Reason? and yet (I think) what I have undertaken will neither require any extraordinary brains, nor pains to demonstrate. For is it not as visible as the Sun in our assent to all matters of Fact from the Authority of Witnesses, and in our obedience to Authority in all indifferent things? for in both these Cases (especially in the latter) he that errs with Authority may plead the Authority for his excuse: but he that errs against it, is quite left without any excuse at all.

For in all things indifferent in their own nature (*i. e.*) all such things which before any Humane Commands concerning them are wholly left to every mans own judgment, being neither forbidden nor commanded by God, if the Authority of our Governours doth intervene, and command that this indifferent thing shall be done, though we did think it more reasonable to be left undone, yet we must be bound in these Cases to obey Authority rather than our own Reason. For otherwise every mans Reason would be his Magistrate, and he should be onely bound to do that which is right
in

in his own eyes and nothing else. Would not our Authors Doctrine be very well fitted to the peace of all Society? and does not he deserve very well from the publick by doing what lies in his power to wheadle into the heads of his unwary Readers (which are the greatest number of men amongst us) that it is safer for every man to be govern'd by the Laws of his own Reason, then by the Laws of the Church and Nation, of which he is a Member?

But now suppose we should err in doing any indifferent things in obedience to our Governours, and that it had been really better that it had not been done, yet our obedience, though contrary to our own Reason should in this case excuse us. Whereas who so errs in following his own Reason, contrary to the commands of Authority in indifferent things, is altogether left without excuse, either before God or Man; unless it be before this good-natur'd Author who is resolved to excuse him by half a Jury of Reasons: but I may justly except against every one of them; for there is none of them that is both honest and true.

First Reason is this. " There is no danger
 " of perishing where there is no disobedi-
 " ence, but without this every man may of-
 " ten err, the command of God being not
 " to find out Truth, but to endeavour the
 " finding it; for the Command is, *Search*
 " *and ye shall find*, p. 66.

Is not this pleasant? For what was the end and design of this Command? onely that we should turn Seekers and borrow *Diogenes* his Candle and Lanthorn, and go peeking about all our life time, that we might in searching have something to busie our selves about? or was it given us that we might find out Truth? If the latter was the end of the Command; then that which binds to the end, commands all the lawful means to that end. So that he which is to search for Truth, is by that Command bid to make use of all those means that God hath afforded him to the finding it out. Wherefore who ever faileth by the wilful neglect of any means he had for the finding Truth, is therefore inexcusable. Now since Authority is the immediate and ready way by which we find out many Truths (as all matters of Fact and History, on which the Truth of Scripture it self doth depend) if any man being to search for any Truths of this sort, shall out of his own self-conceit neglect all Authority (by which the matter was onely to be known) and shall search onely by the reason of the thing; would not any man conclude him to be just as wise, and just as excusable, as he who being commanded to look for the Hare when the Dogs were at a loss, runs to the next house and falls a pulling off the Tyles to look for her in the roof of the house. For might not this wise Servant pretend as good a Reason to excuse himself as our
 Au-

Author's wife Reason that he here alledgeth ? For might he not say to his Master ? Sir, your Command was not to find out the Hare, but onely to search for it ? Do we not think now that this man did very well obey his Masters Command ? and that he ought to be return'd an abundance of thanks for his pains ? for alas poor Fellow ! he did as he was bidden, he looked for the Hare : nay possibly he could give as good a Reason for the manner of his search as any is in all *Humane Reason*, viz. that he that will find what is lost must search, as well where it is not, as where it is : so that he followed but his own Reason in the search ; and therefore if our Author was his Master, he would without doubt rest very well satisfied with him.

Secondly, our Authors next Reason, p. 67. is this. " Because we lay the blasphemous accusation of injustice upon God, if he punish us for an Errour, that we could not avoid.

These are his words : but I suppose it should be thus (if we say that he punisheth us for an Error we could not avoid) for if God Almighty doth really punish us for such Errours, then it could be no blasphemy in us to say so, neither would it be any accusation of injustice, but onely a declaration of the plain Truth.

But what man ever said so, that understood what he said, that God will punish us for Er-

roures that we could no ways avoid? What then is this Reason to the purpose? Oh! very much, saith he. For are not all Errours such which we fall into after a full search for Truth, according to the best means represented to our understanding? I grant it; But if we do not rightly inform our understanding when it is in our power to do it; nay, if we shall neglect any of those means that God hath given us for our information, then our Errour will not be such as we could not avoid; and consequently without any injustice God may and will punish us for it. Wherefore he that shall out of wilful pride neglect Authority or Revelation in searching for Truths that are most properly found out by them, does not use the best and most proper means that God hath given him to that end; and therefore may as justly be punished for his folly (though he may think he follows his own *Humane Reason* in the search) as that Servant did deserve to be well rib roasted by his Master for searching for the Hare at the top of the house, because he did not look for her in the proper place to find her.

The third Reason, p. 68. "Because we ought
 "not to believe Errours of faith to be
 "damnable.

But if these Errours be fundamental and obstinately continued in, against plain means of conviction, in opposition to authority; in spight of our Authors Reason, I must believe them
 dam-

damnable. Oh ! no (saith he) for this is most wildly uncharitable : but why so ? because this was to damn millions of men, for one that shall be saved. But this damns none but such as wilfully and obstinately continue in their errors, and thereby become hereticks ; nor them neither, for it is possible they may live to repent and amend : but if they die in heresie, that they die in damnable sins, we must believe, if we will believe either *S. Paul*, *Gal. 5. 19, 20, &c.* who reckons up seditions and heresies amongst the rest of the black catalogue, which shall shut us out from the Kingdom of heaven ; or *S. Peter*, who plainly tells us, that there are damnable heresies, in his second Epist. *c. 2. v. 1.*

Now if this be contrary to charity to assert, I cannot help it, I have very good company in my uncharitableness ; for *S. Peter* and *S. Paul* are both guilty of it as well as I. Oh uncharitable Apostles ! that had no more pity, nor love, nor compassion in you to those millions of dissenters that were hereticks in your time, but that you must not onely believe, but pronounce the Errors in faith of the greatest part of the world to be damnable heresies ! e'n shift for your selves good Apostles, for this Author hath charg'd you home with wild uncharitableness.

His fourth Reason, *Ibid.* and *p. 69.*

“ We ought not to teach men that any Errors in belief overthrow our hopes of salvation, unless we could give them a cata-

“logue of those Errours that do so.

But why? because this would be more uncomfortable than the other is uncharitable, for it would necessarily lead men into despair.

What then? Must we teach them to throw away their Bibles, and renounce all the Articles of the Christian Faith, and wholly to commit themselves to the guidance of their own Reason (as our Author seems to do, *p. 65.*) and that then they shall be safe enough and need not further trouble their heads with matters of faith or religion. No, surely, there is a middle way which is plain for all men to walk in, which ought to be shown them; (*i. e.*) this: That some errors of faith are damnable, though not all; and we may easily give them a general catalogue of what errors are so, by which they may judge of particulars.

Those Errours of Faith are damnable which are wilfully run into, and all such as are continued in, in opposition to the Authority of the Church perversely, and obstinately: and thus our Author hath a general catalogue of what Errours are damnable; let him make what use of it he can.

The fifth Reason, *p. 69. and 70.* is this.

“Because we cannot know our fault, and
 “therefore have no means of repenting of it:
 “and consequently cannot expect pardon
 “for it; there being no forgiveness without
 “repentance, and repentance, impossible
 with-

" without knowledge of our fault.

But if this be true, it would damn all mankind. For who is there that hath ever had a particular knowledge of all the sins that he hath committed? so that there must be many of them according to this Gentlemans reason, unrepented off, and consequently unpardoned. What's become of this Gentlemans great charity which he hath always boasted of? for this opinion is much more uncharitable then any of those whose uncharitableness he hath so much de-claimed against. But (thanks be to God) this is not true. For sure we are, *David* doth repent him of those faults which he had no knowledge off, *Ps. 19. 12.* in that Prayer of his, *Who can understand his errours? cleanse thou me from my secret faults.* By which the Royal Prophet must mean such faults as he himself had forgotten, and had no knowledge of; else the first part of the verse, which is the reason of the following petition, could have no coherence with the latter, which is the petition it self grounded upon the former. Besides, Why can we have no knowledge of our fault unless it be committed against our own Reason? For though we erre only against authority, and are for a time blinded with prejudice, so that we cannot at present see our error, is it not possible that the prejudice afterwards may be removed, by a due information from others, or by our own serious consideration assisted by the Grace of God? If

it is possible, then there is nothing of truth nor consequence in this Reason.

His sixth Reason, p. 70. is this.

“ The great probability of truth on all sides,
 “ even the erring ones, ought to make us be-
 “ lieve that God will not punish those that
 “ erre.

To this I answer, If our errors be such as are not the effects or causes of any sin in us, we have no reason to think but God will pardon them: But if our errors are the effects of wilfull ignorance, pride, or idleness; or if they have led us into schism and heresie, and contempt of authority, then we can have no hopes of pardon without amendment, wherefore sin being most commonly, either the cause or the effect of our errors, or both; it proves that there is no small danger in them.

But there is no such great danger from errors (saith this Gentleman) p. 71.

“ For it is not consistent with the goodness
 “ of God to have made truth so difficult to be
 “ found out, if he intended to punish the miss
 “ of it with eternal punishments.

To this I answer. That where the difficulty surpasseth the helps that God hath given us, we need not fear that God will punish us eternally for not finding out such truths. For if they had been necessary to be known for our salvation, they should have been suited to our capacity. But if we are wilfully ignorant of any necessary truths,

truths, then it is not contrary to the goodness of God to punish us eternally for it, as well as for any other sin which we die in without repentance. For the same thing might as well be urged to free men, from eternal punishment, for most other sins as well as this of wilfull error. For since it is so very difficult to flesh and blood, to abstain from those sins which profit and pleasure tempts us to, and so easie to run into them; nay since there is but one way of exact vertue, which is the middle way for those many hundreds that lead to vitious extreames; and (as he saith of truth) there is no certain mark set upon that one, to distinguish it from others; he may therefore as well think it inconsistent with the divine goodness to punish men eternally for their vices, as for their errors; since the reason is the very same in both.

But now supposing it was true (which he can never prove) that God would not punish us for our wilful errors, yet since the consequence of errors doth naturally lead us into the most damnable sins, it therefore behooveth us (if we tender our eternal happiness) to take care to preserve our selves from error, which may be not only of dangerous, but of damnable consequence to us.

What then is the wisest way for the most of men, to guard themselves from these dangers?

This is a question well worth our consideration, if we think we have such souls in us, as

are endangered by error to be eternally lost and miserable.

What then must the common people here amongst us (the greatest part of which, have scarce reason enough to demonstrate themselves to be men) do to secure themselves?

I answer. It is the safest way for them, to rely upon the Church, especially in all matters of indifferency and of unnecessary disputes: and upon some of those Guides which the Church hath lawfully called and authorized in all cases of conscience.

For since (as this Gentleman tells us) many, nay most of men, and the wisest of men have erred (though they have had all the advantages to improve their reasons, that this world could afford them) how should any ordinary man, who is void of all helps but his own natural reason, dare to rely upon it alone, in business of so great concern as his eternal happiness or misery? Especially, since he doth not think it convenient to rely upon it in business of lesser concern, *viz.* That of his health or estate.

Now I appeal to all men, that in difficult cases do consult their Lawyer and Physician; whether they do not think it safer to rely upon their judgements, then to be governed only by themselves? they must say they do so, else they were mad to consult them, and give them money for nothing. So that this Author hath the suffrage of all wise men against his opinion, when he
tells

tells us that upon the account of safety, we ought to commit our selves wholly to our own reason in the search of truth. Nay I will refer it to himself, and challenge him upon his reputation (if he hath any left) to tell me whether his own practise doth not contradict his opinion? that is, whether or no he consults his own reason, and commits himself wholly to the guidance of it, in cases that concern his life and estate, or whether he is guided by the Doctor, and the Barrister?

To this perhaps he will answer, that he limits his discourse to the search of Religious truths, in which it is most safe for us to rely upon our own Reason.

But I pray you, Sir, why not then in all other? can you show me any cause of difference? If you say because Religion is grounded upon probabilities, I Answer, so is Physick upon much more uncertainty then Religion; and the Law is no less built upon uncertainties in many cases which have not been determined by presidents. But suppose that religious matters are more intricate and obscure, and less certain then other things; since errors in Religion are no less dangerous to our Souls, then errors in Law and Physick are to our Estates and Lives, (if we believe we have any souls) We ought then to be more careful to consult our Guides of Conscience, then we are to take advice of our Lawyer or Physician. But experience

once and practise is the best teacher.

Let us now suppose every private person to be wholly committed to the guidance of his own reason (according to this Author's Doctrine) and let us see what safety he enjoys thereby.

For then supposing he meets with a cunning Gentleman from *Rome* (that hath been brought up in all advantages of Learning and Education) that should baffle his reason for the defence of Protestantism, then if he will act rationally he must presently turn Papist; and so *vice versa*. The same thing would also hold if he should be baffled by any Jesuit, under the disguise of any other Sectary whatsoever: for he must so often change his Religion as he meets with more crafty Disputants than himself. By which means he might every hour have a several religion, and change so often till at last he had quitted all religion and turn'd Atheist, which we see to be the ordinary consequence of frequent changes. Nay further, suppose he meets with some subtle Jesuit in disguise (whose business it is to convert men, first to debauchery, then to Atheism, and so by degrees to Popery) who should baffle all his reasons for the practise of vertue, nay for the immortality of his soul, and for the being of God (as it may well be suppos'd where there is so great a difference in the advantages of the persons) What then will become of him, if he commits himself only to the guidance

guidance of his own Reason? he must then presently commence Brute, and believe that he hath no more soul then his horse or any other beast, and that he shall die and perish like one of them: nay he must turn Atheist and not only deny the Lord that bought him, but that God that made him, and so be left altogether without any excuse. Is not this person now very safe (think you) under the guidance of his own reason? If therefore it be safe for us to run into Popery, Heresie, and Atheism, let us follow our own Reasons, and wholly commit our selves to our own guidance: if not, Let us follow the Church of *England*, and those guides which she hath set over us in all difficult cases, of which we our selves can be no competent judges; and when we are press'd with any argument for a change in our religion (which we are not able to answer) let us repair to our own lawfull Minister, or to some other that shall direct us, for a satisfaction of our doubts and objections.

And though this may seem a Paradox in this Age of Schism and Faction; yet the relying on the Church is the very same direction that *St. Paul* gives, *1 Tim. 3.* where he calls the Church of God, *The pillar and ground of truth*. For if so, then all that are Christians, ought to rely upon this pillar, and to build their faith upon that which is the ground of truth. But I know he there means the Universal Church.

But

But you'l say, how should I (who am an illiterate person, or a private Gentleman, and understand not the languages in which the Scriptures and other Church-writings are pen'd.) know what the Doctrine of the Universal Church is? for I am not able to search for the Christian Doctrine my self.

I answer, Read the Scriptures in English, and practise those things that are plain and easie in them: and as for difficult disputes either let them quite alone, or else consult in all difficulties the directions of your own Church, the Church of *England*, by those guides which she hath set over you. But may not these deceive me too, as well as my own Reason?

I Answer, It is probable that they whose business it is to study those things, must know them more certainly then I, who have never had time nor convenience to study them.

But supposing they should deceive me, as long as I am in this life, I shall always be subject to errour; and if I do follow these directions, sure I am, it is their fault and not mine, if they lead me into errour; for I have done what I could to prevent it: and sure I am, I cannot this way be led into Popery, Infidelity and Atheism (as I may be if I wholly commit my self to the sole guidance of my own reason) since our Church hath so plainly guarded us against the Idolatry of *Rome* in its plain Homilies, and against Infidelity and Atheism by her full and short Catechism,

chism, and by allowing us the use of the Scriptures. I dare confidently aver, that there is no ways in the world left for us that are unlearned, to keep us (without a miracle) from Heresie, and Schism, or Popery and Atheism, but only by this method that I have now laid down.

If I am mistaken, I shall be very thankful to any one that will show me wherein: If I am not mistaken, I must desire our Author to give me leave to think, that the authority of the Church is a safer Guide to me than my own Reason: and consequently, that all his boast of safety is nothing else but meer impertinence, and falshood.

Several things (it is possible) will be objected against this method which I have laid down for the safety of all private Gentlemen, and men of ordinary capacity, especially for common people; which was this,

That every one should rely upon the Church of *England*, and those Guides of Conscience which she hath authorized in all difficult cases, and doubtfull matters, which surpass his own abilities to judge of.

Against this it may be objected. First, That this is to run into the same implicit faith which we condemn in the *Romanist*; and put out our own eyes that we may see with other mens.

I answer, Not at all: for I allow every one the free use of the Scriptures and their own reasons in all matters that are within the reach of
their

their capacity, and within their proper sphere of action: and for all others that are above them, I have shown them (I am sure) the safest guide I can possibly find. If any body can produce a safer let them, and they will do very good service to the publick.

Secondly, It may be objected, That by this Direction, they that are Papists (especially the common sort of them) are in no possibility to be freed from the *Roman Yoke*; and consequently must continue in Idolatry, and therefore in most imminent peril of damnation.

I Answer, I gave not this direction to Papists, or those that are without our Church; For what have I to do to judge them that are without? But to those who are or ought to be obedient Children of the most Christian and tender Mother the Church of *England*; who is guilty of no corruption from the Primitive Christianity, either in Doctrine or Worship; who enjoyns the Belief of no new Articles of Faith, nor no Idolatrous Worship, nor commands any thing that is sinful to be obeyed; the contrary to which the Church of *Rome* is most apparently guilty of.

Now I refer it to any man, or to all mankind to judge which is the safest way for us of the Church of *England*; whether to perswade all of our Communion to be govern'd by their own Reason, and so to endanger the loss of the greatest part of them that are now free (and must

must continue so, so long as they continue in obedience to our Church) from all fear of Popish Idolatry, and thereby to expose them not onely to all false Religions, but even to be of no Religion at all, for fear of using such Arguments to secure them, as might if used to ignorant Papists, continue them in their Errors and obstruct their conversion to our Church; of which we cannot have half so great a probability, as there is of losing, or at least hazarding their Souls who now are not, nor never can be in any danger so long as they continue in obedience to their own Church? or whether it is safer for them to be kept by Laws in the Communion of the Church of *England*, and in obedience to her injunctions in all honest and lawful things, which is all that our Church requires even of the Clergy themselves.

Thirdly, Another Objection may be this.

That possible it is our Church may in time, as well as the Church of *Rome* (which formerly was a Church as free from all Corruption as ours is now) degenerate into the very same Crimes which we now blame *Rome* for.

I Answer, That then our Church must be quite alter'd from what it is at present, and I onely propose my Method of Safety to all illiterate Persons in Her present Communion; and therefore am not at all concern'd for future contingencies. But if ever she should be chang'd from her Primitive Purity (which
God

God forbid) then, and not till then, will this Objection deserve an Answer. For if possibilities of Errour may render separation allowable, we must never be fixt in any Church, till we can come to that which is triumphant in Heaven: nay, neither can any man be free from a possibility of Errour as long as he is here on Earth, let him propose to himself what Guide he can: And I dare appeal to any man that is rational, whether he must not think that his own Reason may in all probability lead him into Errours, much sooner then the Guides of the Church, especially in such things as he is not a capable Judge of. For surely every mans own Reason is much more subject to a possibility of errors then an whole Church is to a possibility of a total change and alteration. So that it must still remain much safer to relie upon the Church (according to the Rule I have laid down) then it is to relie wholly upon our own Reason.

4. The last Objection I shall answer is this.

That if we that are illiterate must relie upon our Church in all things above our capacity, that then we ought to have practised the same Rule when we were Members of the Church of *Rome*, and consequently ought never to have separated from it: and therefore that our Reformers were Schismatics.

To this I answer. That the *Romish* Doctrine of Transubstantiation, and their Idolatry in wor-

worshipping the Host, &c. besides the Popes Usurpation upon our Regal Authority, was so directly contradictory to the Word of God that he must needs see it, that doth not wilfully shut his eyes.

Secondly, Our Reformation was carried on not by private persons but by the publick power of the Nation, and by all the wisest and most learned Men in it. And consequently it could be no Schism, it being grounded upon so warrantable a Cause and done in so orderly a manner.

To conclude all this Discourse, Let all Circumstances be impartially considered as they are now in the Church of *England*, and I dare refer the Question to the Writer of *Humane Reason* himself, whether it is not a much safer way (for the common people especially) to rely upon her judgment, then upon their own? And whether it is safer for the Publick to maintain the established Religion by the execution of our Laws, or to let Hell break loose amongst us by a general Toleration of all Religions, and by consequence of all debauchery & Atheism, I refer to our Government to consider.

Now for our Authors next Argument by which he would prove his Opinion to be most natural; if he had said purely natural, we might well have granted it him; For it is as foolish an one as one would wish.

The Argument is grounded upon a pretty similitude (which our Author loves as dearly

as

as he doth his Mistress) they that have a mind may read it at length, p. 72. to the 78. for I have something else to do then to bestow time to transcribe it.

The sum of it is this, *viz.*

“ That as in all visible Objects we appeal
 “ to the eye and sense of seeing ; and make
 “ no appeals from it, either to other senses, or
 “ to revelations : so in all rational Objects
 “ we must have recourse onely to our Reasons,
 “ and must in no case appeal from thence ;
 “ and especially in matters of Religion. For
 “ Religion was the main design of mans Creation.

But now if in visible Objects there is an appeal to our higher faculties, then (by vertue of this Gentlemans own Metaphor) there may and ought to be an appeal from our Reason even in rational Objects to some more certain Judge where it may be had.

That there is such an appeal in visible Objects from our sense of seeing to our understanding, is evident in all those Cases in which either the Eye or the medium is defective or disturbed, as he himself doth acknowledge, p. 74. to which I need add but this one Instance. The Stars appear to our eyes to be no bigger then the Nails in the Spoke of a Cart-wheel, though they are (as Astronomers do demonstrate) vastly greater then the whole Earth. Now then it is as clear as the Sun that there must

must be an appeal from our senses, otherwise we must believe that the Stars are very considerable things, and that the Sun it self is no bigger then a Bushel; because we see them appear of no greater Dimensions.

From whence there can be nothing more evident then this. That as in visible Objects the Soul can make no certain judgment when the Sense is diseas'd or defective, or the Medium is disturb'd; and that as when the appearance of visible Objects to our Senses doth contradict our rational Faculties, we believe our Reason rather then our Eyes: so our Souls can pass no certain sentence concerning intelligible things when her understanding is any ways disturb'd, and when the Object is too high for our Reason; and that we ought therefore to appeal from our Reason when it contradicts any higher and better Demonstration, particularly when it seems to contradict Divine revelation, because we must be assured that the Reason of God is much more certain and infallible then the Reason of man, unless *Humane Reason* teacheth us to think our selves wiser then God.

So that from this Metaphor (if similitudes may pass for Arguments, as they do with our Author, who scarce useth any other) it follows that as in visible Objects we must not always believe our eyes, so neither in intelligible Objects must we always believe our Reason.

Where.

Wherefore all that this Gentleman hath got by this Argument, is, That he hath made a Rod for his own Britch. For he hath hereby fully demonstrated the folly of his whole Book; for the Reason of most men being depraved and blinded with prejudice; and passion, ignorance, and interest, is no more to be believed then the eye that is distempered with the Jaundise or any other Disease; and therefore that is a madness for most men to give themselves up wholly to the guidance of their own Reasons.

Nay it further follows from hence, that as he would be thought a mad man, or at least a very pragmatistical fellow, who will believe his own eyes against the testimony of thousands of others, who have greater advantages of seeing the object then himself; so he must be thought very pragmatistical, if not mad, who will believe only his own reason against the judgement of thousands of others, who are all wiser then himself: he then must be a pragmatistical fool that will believe his own reason when it contradicts the Universal testimony of the whole Church. So that our Author's singularity in renouncing all authority (his own argument proves) is a piece of the greatest pride and folly.

Now, Sir, you see how easie it is to retort your little similes upon yourself: and what a great advantage you gain to your cause, by making true comparisons of things. I do believe your wit is good, but your luck is stark naught

naught at similitudes: since therefore they have prov'd so unlucky to you, let me advise you as a friend, not to use them any more for demonstrations; and then I am very confident that the world will not be troubled with any more of your scribbling.

But now let us suppose our Author's consequence to be good, and his metaphors to be demonstrative; and let us but observe the natural tendency of it; and if that will not be sufficient to demonstrate the danger and folly of his opinion, I know not what can.

For if because God hath given us our reason to be our guide, in all intelligible matters, and consequently in matters of Religion (as he hath given us our eyes to guide us in all visible objects) and that therefore there must lie no appeal from our reason in any matters of faith or religion; why then doth it not hold in all matters of Law and Justice?

I challenge him to show me any reason if he can, for is it not the office of our reason to guide us as well in all other matters, as in the concerns of religion? and yet surely there is no man (unless it be this Author) can be so senseless to think otherwise, then that he which lives in a society must submit the external exercise of his own private reason to the publick laws, or else that he ought to be cast out of the protection of that society, and to have no benefit of the laws, which he will not submit to: and yet is it

not natural for every man to govern himself by his own reason in every particular concern and action of his life as well as in Religion? Must then our governours out of pure good nature cancel all our laws, and give every man leave to follow the guidance of his own reason alone in all things, because it is most natural to every man to be so guided? What an unnatural Parliament have we, that will hang men for stealing or murder? for hath not nature given every man hands to take such things as he hath need off? and why should he not kill any man who opposeth him in making use of his natural right to preserve his life?

Thus our Author's natural Argument serves in its direct consequence to dissolve all society, and to destroy all law and right: or else to demonstrate himself to be a meer natural, in not seeing the so obvious and pernicious consequence of it; or something worse if he did see it, and yet dar'd to insinuate it by little similes into the fickle heads of the self-conceited multitude. But perhaps it was only pure good nature in him. For is it not a great deal of pity that men should be restrained from the free use of that which is so natural to every one, as is his own reason?

But I cannot for my life imagine what should put our Author into so sudden a fit of good nature; for (if I am not deceived in the person) the Gentleman is not always guilty of
it:

it : certainly there was some particular cause for it at present, and perhaps it was this. To draw in the women for toleration, that so they might draw in the men. For

So Indians draw in the Female

Elephant, & inveigle the Male.

and one good turn requires another; so that those kind souls of that Sex that know themselves apt to mistake another man for their own husband, are extremely obliged to this Gentleman's *Humane Reason* and good nature, and therefore they ought to be of his party; for he hath most effectually and demonstratively pleaded their cause. For when the good man peeps through his horns and sees something that makes them begin to stand on an end for anger at his wife, she need but onely tell him that she did but make that natural use of her parts, which her own reason did dictate to her, and that she truly knows no reason to the contrary, why she might not make that natural use of her tail to get a livelihood by, as well as others do of their hands or their tongues; and the poor cuckold must rest fully satisfied with this answer of his wife, and put his horns in his pocket, and sneak away for fear of being accounted an irrational coxcomb, for not understanding *Humane Reason*.

I wonder now, that all the Whores and Rogues, as well as the Quakers, did not come and return this Author thanks for his Book.

It is a great deal of pity they did not, What a goodly company of friends would there have met together ! and how lovingly would they have greeted and embraced one another with the close-hug !

Now I have done with this Gentlemans Naturalls, and must proceed to take a view of his Politicks, and it would be very strange if these should not be as like the former, as ever any child was to the parents.

His third Argument, p. 78. is this.

“ That it is likewise most agreeable to the
 “ good and interest of humane society, for
 “ all Wars of late years have been either real-
 “ ly for Religion, or at least that hath been
 “ one of the chief pretenses ; which if it were
 “ quite taken away, the people could not
 “ thereby be drawn into a civil, or forraign
 “ War.

Fare you well for a Politician.

What ! must all Religion be removed out of the world ? surely never any man in the heathen Politicks ever found such an assertion as this, much less amongst any that did but so much as pretend to the name of a Christian.

Neither is this assertion more contrary to Christianity, then it is to true Politicks.

For I dare undertake to demonstrate, that no other principle whatsoever, only Religion, can be the main support and foundation of society : So that if Religion be remov'd, the society must

must necessarily fall; and consequently, whoever endeavours to undermine and destroy Religion, is a publick enemy to all mankind.

For (setting aside Religion) there is no other principle that can keep men good subjects, good children, or good servants: nay to go higher still, nothing but Religion implanted in the minds of men, can preserve Princes in their Thrones, or Parents or Masters in their Families. There can be but two principles that can pretend to do it (that I know of) besides Religion, and these are,

First, Sense of honour and reputation.

Secondly, Fear of laws and temporal punishments.

But that neither of these can do it without the help of Religion will be evident to any man that will but allow himself a due consideration of it. For supposing all men were rid of Religion, then the grand maxime by which they must rationally govern their actions, must be only their own present preservation and welfare; So that whatsoever makes for their present advantage, can be no ways dishonourable for them in their own thoughts; and as for a disesteem or dishonour from others, it would only oblige them to act their crimes in secret, not at all to avoid them. For if they did but act their villainies (though never so horrid) so privately, that other men could not know them to be the actors nor the authors of them, they

would thereby be secure enough from all dishonour from their actions. And as for the fear of laws, the very same thing, *viz.* secrecy in their actions would equally secure them from the punishment of the laws as from disgrace.

So that if I can prove that the horridest murders may possibly be committed so privately, that the world shall not know the authors nor the actors of them (which is easily demonstrable to him that considers how easie it is to be guilty of perjury and forgery; and that there are such things as fire, poisons, and poniards in the world:) and that in most kingdoms and families mens present interest would incite them (had they no better principle to govern them) to the worst of villanies, even such as would ruine all government either of nations or families, it will follow, that neither sense of honour nor fear of laws could keep men from them.

Now that mens present interest would prompt them to the murder of their Prince is most evident in the next heir to the Crown; for would it not prompt him to remove his father, that he might ascend the throne, and sway the scepter, which he could not hope to do as long as his father lived? Neither could disgrace keep him from this murder, if it was but done privately; and much less could fear of temporal punishments in the least deter him from this horrid murder of his Prince and Father, unless it were fear of those that might be suppos'd
from

from religious Principles. For his Father is no sooner dead, but in all hereditary Monarchies the next Heir is actually Supream; and therefore above all Humane Judicature of the Laws, and all corporal or capital punishments from his Subjects.

Neither would the Governours of Families be much more secure from their next Heirs, whose interest would lead them to murder their Fathers, that so they might enjoy their Estates that would descend to them by Inheritance. Now (was there not a Conscience and secret dread of Religion that awed the minds of Children from the thoughts of so horrid villainies) it would be too easie for those that live under the same roof, and have all opportunities of secrecie in their crimes, to act any villainy so privately that their interest should lead them to, as that they should never without a Miracle be discovered.

But supposing they should be discovered, it is onely death which is the utmost punishment they can fear, which (according to the Atheists Principles) would be no such dreadful matter; for it would onely put an end to all those troubles and disquiets they here labour under.

Now that this would be the consequence that would ensue, if mens minds were free from religious dreads, is evident from the practise of debauched persons, who have run themselves into Atheism. For we see they

stick not to hazard their lives daily for the satisfaction of their lusts by the perpetration of any villanies (even theft and murder not excepted) for hopes of a very small and inconsiderable gain in comparison of that which the death of a Father would afford the next Heir: nay, we see that amongst wise and sober men, the Merchant doth expose his life and estate to the most uncertain of all things, even the winds and the waves, for the hopes of a far more uncertain gain then this would be to the Heir: and the Souldier doth daily bid defiance to death in the open Field, onely for the sake of a poor livelihood.

What then could preserve our Houses, Towns and Cities from Fire, our Lives or our Estates from perjury, or our Persons from poison and ponyard, or our Wives from abusing our Beds, or our Neighbours from cheating us, was all Religion rooted out of the world? Would not a Commonwealth of Men be soon worse then a Desert of Beasts, Reason enabling men to do more mischief one to another, and to act it more privately and effectually then the Brutes? We cannot then but see by this time how absolutely necessary Religion is to the good and welfare of all Mankind and all Societies. Wherefore those Gentlemen that delight to promote Atheistical Discourses (sorry I am to think this Age should afford any such of that quality) do expose themselves to
be

Be thought Enemies to all Mankind by all wise men, and never to be trusted by any but inconsiderate Fools. Had they therefore a true sense of their own reputation, they would never be guilty of that gross folly, to say, *there is no God*, or openly to countenance Atheism.

I hope this Gentleman our Author hath no such Design, though by his excusing Atheism before, as well as by his words in this place he hath given me too much Reason to suspect it.

I pray God our Magistrates may take care to revive those Laws that may put a stop to the growth of Atheism amongst us, which they are obliged to do, even for their own present preservation, unless they can think it safe that our Nation should be quite overrun with such a sort of Villains, that will stick at nothing (though never so hellish a crime) when their present interest, or the satisfaction of some brutish lust shall prompt them to it. For if these grow numerous, they themselves will not be in a much safer condition than the meanest Subject. For they that once come to that height of madness to contemn their own lives and estates (out of Atheistical Principles) are Masters of the lives and estates of all other men.

Secondly, To come to something more directly in answer to our grand Politician. I must be forced to tell him (as he did his extraordinary friend T.H.) in plain English that it is

false; That Religion hath been so much as the pretence of all Wars that have been of late years amongst us. Was it not a dispute betwixt the Rights and Liberties of the Subject, and the Prerogatives of the Crown, that was the first pretence of the late dismal and unnatural War amongst our selves, though (it is never to be forgotten that) Religion was afterwards drawn in to countenance Rebellion, even by some of those very persons that are still Praters in unlawful Conventicles, and do (as far as they can) still continue Leaders of Faction and Sedition?

Was it Religion or the vindication of our just Rights that was the cause, or so much as the pretence of our late Wars against the Dutch?

Is it Religion or Interest and desire of Dominion that at this present sets the greatest part of Christendom in a Flame, and causeth so much effusion of Christian Blood by the French Armies?

From whence nothing can be clearer then this, That it is Interest and Propriety, Right and Liberty, Power and Dominion that are the Causes and Pretences of Wars, not Religion. Shall we therefore (according to the Reason of our Author's grand Politicks) remove all Power and Dominion, and all Right, Liberty and Propriety out of the world, because if they were removed, the people could never there-

thereby be drawn into a civil or forreign War? Are not the most necessary & the best of things always most ready to be abused, and the most destructive when they are so? Go thy ways Sir Politick! for if thou hast not deserved to be knighted for this Book, I believe thou art very much mistaken in thy own modest thoughts of thy self. What pity it is thou art not a Privy Councillour! Ingrateful age that will not raise him fifty Cubits higher then other men who hath well deserved it! certainly it is a great deal of pity that the Gentleman should not be preferr'd according to his Merits. Plato in his *Phaedo* tells us that nothing drives us to fightings, wars and seditions, but the body and its lusts; And does not St. James (if happily he may be of any credit or authority with this Gentleman) tell us the very same thing? James 4. 1. *From whence (says he) come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence even of your lusts that war in your Members?* &c. So then all wars, brawlings, seditions, strifes, dissentions are raised and promoted not properly and truly for Religions sake (which does not, cannot, authorize or countenance any thing of that nature) but for the sake of money, ambition, or profit, or some such like temporary, worldly and carnal consideration; and yet I suppose our Sr. Pol. loves his body, his lusts, and his money a little too well to have them removed out of the world,

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lest they should be the cause of wars and seditions.

But supposing what he saith was true, *viz.* That Religion was really, or at least in pretence the cause of all Wars, since I have demonstrated it so absolutely necessary to the peace of all Societies, what ought to be done with it? ought it to be removed out of the world? or rather ought not such care to be taken by establishing the Church of *England*, that it might be impossible to make Religion a pretence of Rebellion? and this directly leads me to the next Reason against our Author's Politicks, *viz.*

Thirdly, That there is no Religion under Heaven doth better (I might say so well) secure the publick Peace as ours of the Church of *England*. For can any Religion be more peaceable then that which makes resistance to Magistrates (in any case whatsoever) to be a most damnable crime? then that Doctrine that tends to the highest perfection of our Humane Natures, that brings our bodies under the subjection of our souls, and both under subjection to God, that exalts our nature from being like the Beasts that perish, and makes us partakers of the Divine Nature, by rooting out those lusts and vices that cause war and strife amongst us, and by planting in us all those heavenly Graces, that would secure the peace
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of the world; and make us like unto God, and fit to enjoy him to all Eternity; that most conduceth to the good of all Mankind; that establisheth peace, unity, and universal charity amongst all men, that preserves the quiet of Families, the tranquillity of our Souls, and the health of our Bodies! In sum, can any Religion better promote the peace of our Nation than that which commands every man to do all the good he can to every man, and proposeth infinite and eternal Rewards to those that obey it; that forbids all manner of evil towards any man under pain of the greatest, most inevitable and eternal torments, and makes not the least allowance for the least of evils either in thought, word, or deed?

Have we not seen the peaceable effects of our Church, and her Doctrine in the time of the late miserable Wars amongst us? For not one true Son of the Church of *England* could ever be forced by the fear of penalties, or ever be allured by the hopes of Reward, to take up Arms against his Sovereign. Whereas there is no other sort of men in *England*, but too many of them were guilty even of actual Rebellion, being led into it even by the very Principles of their Religion.

Why then should this Religion be removed from the minds of men? would it promote peace to take away that which is the grand Foundation of it; and to implant in the room
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of its principles of all kind of sedition and disobedience? Would it preserve his sacred Majesty and our Laws, to destroy that Church which is their greatest defence? Is it forgotten already how true our late sad experience prov'd it, No Church, no King, and no King, no Laws? May not our Church therefore justly say to those that would destroy her (as our Saviour did to those that would have ston'd him) for which of these good works that I have done amongst you, would you now kill me? This our Politician saw well enough, and is forced to confess it, in that he saith Unity in Religion would produce the same effect as that Principle which he propos'd.

But now let us consider that which is the main Design of his Book, which he proposeth, instead of the Church of England to maintain peace and quietness in our Nation. Which we have, p. 74. viz.

“That this should be made the main and
“general Ground of all Religions that every
“man should quietly enjoy his own.

I remember a Fable in *Aesop* to this purpose. The Mice were in a grand consultation how to preserve themselves from their mortal Foes the Cats; at length after a long and serious Debate, one of them, who (like our Author) thought himself a better Politician than all the rest, very gravely gives them this wise advice, That every Cat should wear a Bell about his Neck,

Neck, that so they might be warn'd of his coming by the Sound, and might have time to provide for their safety. This Advice no doubt was approv'd as very safe by all the company (as this Gentlemans Proposal is by all his wise Admirers.) but at last one sawcy Mouse spoils all with onely asking this Question (as a man might ask our Author) *viz.* How this Advice should be put in Execution? which made them all break up their Council-board with a loud laughter at the folly of their Counsellour, whose great wisdom they did just before so much admire.

Against our Sir Pol's Advice (besides the impossibility of the Proposal) I may urge the General consent of all or most of the Nations in the whole world. For let him or any man produce if he can, any one Monarchy under Heaven in which the publick exercise of every mans particular Religion is allowed him, where there is no standing Army to keep the people in obedience; so that it is most evident, that in every Nation either a standing Army, or the establishment of an Unity in Religion is absolutely necessary for publick Peace and Safety. Now whether it will be thought more convenient for the Peace of *England* to uphold the Church, or to submit to the Long Sword, I refer it to all English Gentlemen to judge.

If our Author shall say he means onely the private exercise of every man's Religion.

I answer, that no Nation nor Church in the whole world allows a greater liberty in the private exercise of Religion then we have. For is it not established by Act of Parliament, that every man shall have liberty to exercise his own Religion, not only with those of his own family, but with five more strangers & so that it is not for Religion, but for the contempt of the Laws, and for endangering by unlawfull and numerous assemblies the peace and welfare of our nation, that any one is or can be punished by our Laws. This our Politician cannot be ignorant of, and therefore he must mean not the private, but the publick exercise of every mans Religion.

It may be this Gentleman is an experimental Philosopher, and is therefore induced to try experiments in Religion and Politicks, as well as in Naturals; though he thereby hazards the safety of a whole Nation. I will now (as far as can be) try it with him by granting him what he would have, as to the last part of it (for the first is altogether impossible) and by letting him see the consequence of it, in those Sects amongst us.

Suppose then, that some men onely pretend Religion, to gather parties together to set up a Commonwealth instead of the best Form of Government in the whole world, which we now have established amongst us; (as it is to be feared most of our Phanaticks do, especially: the

the main leaders and abettors of them;) for though I will not say all dissenters from the Church, are for a Commonwealth in the State; yet this (I believe) our experience and observation may prove true, that all Commonwealths-men are Schismaricks, or at least favourers of schism and faction, and great sticklers for a toleration; and are not these precious youths (think you) to be tolerated in a Monarchy? and would not it much conduce to the safety of the Monarchy to let them meet by thousands in a company, till they have drawn in all the common people to their party? who are too easily seduced with noise and action, and an appearance of zeal, joyn'd with some few wheedling doctrines that are preach'd to them; which tend more to make them have an opinion of their own holiness, then to make them really holy, to perswade them that they are saints, rather then to show them how they must be so.

Secondly, Suppose others pretend Religion onely to countenance their former Rebellion; is it not very fit that these should be suffered to meet, as often and as many as they please? and yet that there are too many of this sort amongst our Conventiclers, is too probable, in that we see very few others (unless the poor ignorant women) who are constant meeters, but such as either were themselves actually engaged in the late Rebellion, or else are very nearly related
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to them that were, or else have lost some unjust or sacrilegious advantage which they had got in the late times. Now is not his Majesty bound to let these good people have their wills in gratitude to them, for what they did on that Fatal 30th of *January*, never to be thought on without horror and amazement? or, is he not bound to give them back again the Bishops and the Loyal Gentrey's and Nobilities Lands, which they had sequestred, onely out of pure kindness to them for the good service they have done him?

Thirdly, Suppose others are downright Atheists, and will worship God no ways at all; but make it their business to root out all Religion out of mens minds, and so to dissolve the main bond of Humane Society, (as too many such we have amongst us, and shall soon have more, if our Laws be not executed) Are these persons to be let alone in the enjoyment of their Atheism? Have I not already prov'd that they are the most dangerous enemies to all Government?

Fourthly, Suppose others have a design of setting up some forraign power, in all Spiritual Causes, and in all Causes that tend in order to Spirituals (*i. e.* in plain *English* in all Causes that they please) to which the King must submit his Crown, enjoying it onely as in Fee from the Pope; and therefore must be his Holiness's slave and pack-horse. Is it not very safe

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for the Kings Authority, and for the Peace of the Nation, to tolerate These? And yet these are the two grand Sects of our Nation, viz. The Papists, who Subject the King to the Pope; and the Presbyterians, who make him truckle to the Kirk. Nay all our Sectaries have already got the distinction in their mouths, That they ought to obey the Kings Authority, in Civil matters, but not in Ecclesiastical: So that They only want a little improvement of that distinction, to make Them enlarge Ecclesiastical matters so far as the Papists usually do, and then They shall not need to think Themselves obliged to pay the King any obedience at all; only in such things as they please to call Civil Matters, which I am sure will not be in any thing that thwarts their own humours and interests: for whatsoever does but in the least contradict them, will be thought very Uncivil by them.

Fifthly, Suppose others (as the *Scotch Presbyterians*) hold, That every man ought to fight for his Religion, against whoever doth oppose him. Are not those peaceable harmless souls to be tolerated, to propagate this so meek and quiet a Doctrine?

Sixthly, Suppose others are *Millenaries*, and from thence proceed to be *Venierists*, and think that Christ shall reign a thousand years personally upon the earth, and that they shall reign with him, and be his Vicegerents, and in

in order thereto, think it is their duty to use fire and sword (those excellent Spiritual weapons of their Christian warfare) to kill all men for King-Jesus his sake. These surely are very fit to be tolerated in the bloody exercise of their Religion.

Seventhly, Suppose (to mention no more) that some are Adamists and Levellers, that think there ought to be no distinction of persons, because none should be higher then themselves; and consequently, no order should be observed, nor respect paid to Governors, Nobles and Gentlemen; and that they pretend to be Govern'd by the Light within them (*i. e.* whatsoever they please to call so, whether their phantasies or their passions.) Would not the publick allowance of all these Sects, and their severall practises according to their different Opinions, make a most profound and everlasting Peace in a Nation?

I might instance in many more, but here are enough already, to let our Author see by experiment, the grand folly and madness of his proposal.

I know he will say, that he supposeth not onely that every man should enjoy the quiet exercise of his own Religion; but that his Religion should be this, that every man else as well as himself should have the same liberty.

In answer to this, I would fain know how he can implant this principle into mens minds?

or whether it is not much easier to make all Sects comply with the established Religion of the Church of *England*, then to consent in his principle? for this principle is as directly contrary to the most (if not to all) the Sects amongst us, as is the Religion of our Church. For there is no Sect but does endeavour to promote its Party and Opinions above all others, and to implant its own Doctrine in the minds of all men with whom they converse. For this must needs be in all persons that do sincerely think their way to be the best to Eternal happiness, (which all men must do that are reasonable, and not apparent Hypocrites.) So that the Religion of all men (that have truly any Religion) must oblige them to propagate those truths, which they think necessary, or at least convenient for men to know for their salvation; and to promote that which they think the pure Worship of God, in opposition to all false and superstitious ways of his worship (*i. e.*) in opposition to all other ways but their own.

Wherefore this Gentlemans Politick proposal is just such another, as that of the Politick Mouse in the Fable before mentioned, *viz.* altogether impracticable; if not an absolute contradiction to it self, and an impossibility: nay herein it is much worse then it, for it is most destructive to those to whom it is given.

For were all men allowed to preach what Doctrines they pleas'd, the Laws and Government

ment of our Nation could never be maintained or executed, without a constant force and violence: for the minds of men would soon be debauched with such principles as are inconsistent with all propriety and government, and yet preaching and hearing must be the least liberty that must be allowed them, according to our Author's sage advice.

But to this I know he will answer, that the Civil Laws should take such care as no man should dare to speak anything against the established Government of the Nation.

But (I pray you Sir) would it not be much more easie to prevent by the execution of our Laws any such unlawfull meetings, then (when they are met) to hinder them by law from speaking treason, or any thing else that they please?

For is it not easie to wire-draw it in by such consequence as their own people shall easily understand what they mean though no law can possibly take hold of the expression?

For instance, Suppose in times when Rebellion is prosperous, or at least (when it is hoped there may be such a time) to prepare the people before hand to be rebels, or to continue them in their rebellion. It is but telling the people that they are Gods dear ones, which he will not, nor he cannot forsake, but is bound to fight for them against all their enemies, and then if they have but a little success, it is but pressing

pressing home that peaceable Doctrine of J. O. D. D. that to follow success is to follow providence, and the people shall be sure to follow you, though you lead them to storm hell it self, and to take it by violence; and yet what law can condemn any word of J. O's Doctrine?

Again, Suppose a man hath a mind to preach Treason to his party. It is but taking that text in the 149 Psalm, *Let the Saints be joyful in glory, &c. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hands, to execute vengeance upon the Heathen, and punishments upon the People, to bind their Kings in Chains, and their Nobles with Links of Iron, to execute upon them the judgment written, This honour have all his Saints.* Now the godly people being before-hand well prepared with that constant conceit, that they are Gods Saints (which they are always taught in all Conventicles) they must apply all those words to themselves, and consequently conclude (as they have done formerly) that the power of binding their Kings in Chains and their Nobles in Links of Iron, and of executing vengeance upon them, &c. belongs absolutely to every one of them: and therefore that if the Scepter be in the hands of any other person (whom they please to call the wicked or unregenerate, that he is but an Usurper of Dominion over them, and that he holds by force that Scepter and Power which is their right, and by consequence
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that (as soon as they can do it) they ought to bind him in Chains, and all his Loyal Nobility in Fetters of Iron, and to execute vengeance upon them: Or if they be a little dull of understanding, it is but helping them out, by telling them that God created the Heavens and the Earth, and all things onely for the sake of the Saints and the godly party; and they will as readily run into all the rest, as an Ass to his Provender; nay, and it fatts them as much. And yet it is impossible for any Law to punish a man for any thing that I have suppos'd him to preach, because there is nothing which he need lay to the people to perswade them to Treason, that the Law can interpret to be treasonable.

There are several Texts of Scripture that will do the same feat by the help of their glosses. As we know *Curse ye Meroz* hath most effectually done it already: and all those Texts where God is said to blame or punish his people for the breach of any Covenant whatsoever, if applied to those persons that ignorantly and superstitiously were drawn in, to take that damnable and accursed Covenant in the late Times, they shall presently think that the most heavy judgments will suddenly fall upon their heads, if they should break the least syllable of that abominable Oath; nay the most scrupulous of them shall think themselves bound (for fear of the most signal calamities to be inflicted on them by God, if they neglect

lest their covenant with him) to be vigorous in acting any thing which that rebellious Oath leads them to. And yet how easily this may be wheedled into such people without ever coming under the lash of the Law, is most visible to any man that hath but common sense.

Another Text of Scripture, which can do them Knights-service, if seasonably exercised upon, is the whole second Psalm: On which, not long since (as I am inform'd) there was a six hours Exercise, at a numerous meeting of all sorts of Phanaticks together, not far from London: The occasion of their meeting was a Solemn Fast, appointed by their Leaders, to pray God to avert Persecution from them; only because the King had set out His last Proclamations to put his Laws in Execution. Now if this was not a seasonable Text for their purpose I am mistaken: for if we take this for granted (as they themselves always do) That they are all, Gods Saints and his Anointed: how could they interpret this Text but to this purpose, viz. That now *the Kings of the Earth*, that is, our King, and *the Rulers* (that is, the Governours of our Nation) *take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed*, that is, against them and their Conventicles. *He that sitteth in the Heavens shall laugh them to scorn: the Lord shall have them in derision: that is, according to their gloss on that occasion; that though our King and Council do lay their*

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heads together against them and their meetings, yet God shall make all their designs vain, and a devision; nay, he shall inflict most heavy punishments upon them. For he shall speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. And therefore that our King and our Judges that would execute the Laws upon them, do but oppose Christ; wherefore they triumph over them in the words of that Psalm, *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings; be instructed ye Judges of the Earth, serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling; that is, Serve him by quaking and wringing in a Conventicle: Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish; that is, Submit your Authority to Christ, that is to them that preach Christ in an unlawful Meeting-house, or else be sure ye shall all perish.* Now I do not say that they did thus apply this Scripture, but I appeal to any man whether the common people (being before prejudiced with those Opinions that most of the Phanaticks are) hearing these words upon that occasion, might not naturally and almost necessarily run themselves into such an interpretation of them: and judge whether their Teachers had not such a Design, when though they could appoint a Fast, to cry down the execution of our national Laws as persecution; yet never in the least take notice of any Fast upon the 30th of January. Are not these think you, Excellent Subjects? And are they

they not very thankful to the King for his former Indulgence to them?

Other Doctrines there are which no Civil Law can lay hold on; and yet are most pernicious to all Society. As that of a good intention.

For suppose a man tells his people they must look well to their hearts, intentions and meanings; for God requires the heart, and give him but the heart, and they shall be sure to be accepted by him: or in plain English, that if we mean well God will see no fault in us. For our well meaning shall even claim pardon for us before God. Now this appears at first sight a very innocent Doctrine: and what Humane Law can take notice of any one word in it? and yet in its direct consequence it excuseth all the villanies and mischiefs in the world.

For may not a man mean well (*i. e.* intend his actions to a good end) when he murders his Prince or his Father, or acts any other crime whatsoever?

For a man can scarce propose a better design to himself, then to free a whole Nation from Oppression; He shall therefore (according to this Doctrine) be sure enough of pardon if he murders his Prince, if he does but think him an Oppressor.

Thus he that hath an hard or uncharitable Father, if he does but intend to do more good with his Fathers Estate then he does, may

come at it how he will (though by the murder of his Father) however he is safe enough in his good intentions. It is without doubt a very good design for any man to prevent his Neighbour from running into sin, and hazard-
ing his Soul by it; and therefore (according to this Doctrine) his next Neighbour might e'n knock him on the head to prevent his continuance in sin; or cheat him of his Estate, to prevent his running into drunkenness and debauchery by it.

Next to this Doctrine of a good meaning, is that of a good Conscience; nay, much of the same kindred with it. For if men be taught that their own Conscience is the sole moderator of all their actions, and be not well instructed how to inform their Consciences aright, they necessarily run themselves into all those crimes before mentioned. For suppose that this Doctrine be but preach'd amongst the people, that he that acts according to his Conscience, is therefore excusable before God (as it is most frequently taught in our unlawful Assemblies) it will thence follow, that whatever Errours they are possessed withall, they may act according to them. So that if a man be but prepossessed with that opinion of a good intention; or of Dominion and Right being found in grace, or that of *J. O.* that to follow success is to follow providence, or a thousand others that might and have been taught

taught them in the late Times, he might act according to his Conscience, and be guilty of the most horrid crimes that ever were committed (even the murder of his Prince or Father not excepted) and yet (according to this Doctrine) be in as hopeful a way of salvation as any man in the world.

Next to this (or rather the very same) is our Authors Doctrine of every mans governing himself by his own Reason only; for he hath hereby made Schism, Herefie, Infidelity and Atheism to be excusable: and he might as well (if he had pleas'd) have thereby excused Adultery, Theft, Murder, or any other crime whatsoever.

For if our own *Humane Reason* be prejudiced, and blinded with mistakes and errours (the conscience may be kept inviolable) and yet the man may run into any crimes that can be thought on, and that with the greatest confidence, and assurance of his eternal happiness.

And yet I would fain know of our Politician, what civil Law can take notice of these Doctrines, of every mans being governed by his own conscience or his own reason?

Oh! the blessed peace, and incomparable quiet that would possess the world, if it was but so wise to be governed by his Politicks, and would but let every one enjoy his own Religion! that is, if every man that hath itching ears was permitted to heap up teachers to himself according to his own lusts?

What a sort of old silly Fops are the Privy Councillours and States-men of all the Nations of the world, to make such a stir for an Unity in Religion, when (according to our Sir Pow.) a general toleration of all Religions had much better maintain'd the peace of the world? For who then (saith he) would quarrel about matters of Religion?

I think I have already prov'd that every body would, that is sincere in the profession of any Religion whatsoever: for he must (if he be true to himself in his choice) choose that way of Religion, which he thinks the nearest and most certain way to happiness, and consequently when he hath made that choice, he must think himself in a better way to happiness, then any other man that is not of his way, and by the same reason must every one that differs from him think himself in a better way then he: and would not this at last amount to continued disputes and quarrels of every man against every man? for would not charity oblige me even by force (if no other ways will do it) to compel others into my way, to prevent the imminent danger of their souls, which I must needs think them in, whilst they continued in any other way of Religion? this must therefore be the natural consequence of things, if men be sincere in their Religion. For it cannot be said that every man might be saved in his own Religion; For this were to countenance

nance all the crimes in the world, and to prove that men might be saved, though they were guilty of all of them, as well as he that is innocent, since I have prov'd it possible that they might (nay probable that they must) be led into any villainies whatsoever, by their mistakes in Religion: And lastly, this would also undeniably follow from hence, (what our Author hath endeavoured to prove) viz. that Jews, Turks, Heathens, and Atheists, are in an equal possibility of salvation with the unerring Christian: and if so, then farewell Christianity.

Wherefore unless our Author could (by this new device of his, of every man's enjoying his own Religion) bring men into the grossest hypocrisie or Atheism, he is never the nearer securing the peace of the world from it. For have I not already prov'd, that if men acted according to their different Opinions in Religion (which all that are Religious must do,) that they must necessarily be led into such actions as would disturb, if not quite destroy, the Peace of our Nation, or any government in the whole world? I dare challenge our Author to show me wherein I have fail'd in the proof of it; in those examples I have given of the Sectaries at this present time amongst us.

But it may be he thinks, that if every man was permitted to enjoy his own Religion, this would soon reduce the world into Atheism,

and perhaps he propos'd it to the world for that very end and design; truly I am very apt to believe it, and think I have reason enough to do so: but however the mischief is, that neither would Atheism preserve but quite destroy the publick peace, (as I dare be so confident to say) I have already undeniably demonstrated.

What then remains? but that that he doth ingenuously acknowledge he was in an error; and that he was led into it by an over-high conceit of his own parts; methinks it would be a far greater testimony of his ingenuity than any he has given, if he would labour speedily to undeceive (as far as he can) his unwary Readers, who have been too much venom'd by his poysonous and pernicious opinions; by dealing honestly and plainly with them, and by explaining himself in such sort, as that we may have no longer just reason to suspect that the whole design of his Book was directly intended against the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *England*; and indeed to patronize all irreligion and Atheism. This consideration I refer to the Gentleman's own great humility and good nature: though (I must confess) I have but little hopes that this advice will have any tolerable effect or influence upon him, since he tells us, that it is as great a Martyrdom to acknowledge an error, as it is to lay down ones life for the Truth; and I am very confident this Author hath no great maw to Martyrdom.

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Wherefore I onely refer it to our Governours, whether it is not necessary to make him do it? Since therefore without Religion no Society can be preserved, and since all confusion would follow all Religions, and that of all the Religions in the whole world, this of our Church of *England* is the most peaceable in its Doctrine, and most moderate in its Discipline, Let all that love the Peace of the Nation joyn in our mutual prayers and endeavours for the Peace and Unity of the Church.

But these endeavours are all vain (saith our *Sir Pol.*) for both reason and experience tells us, that the hopes of Unity in Religion are impossible.

But (I pray you Sir) what reason, what experience tells us so? All the reason that I know of, is only because your Worship would have it so. Have we not such laws, as if they were executed would easily guard our Religion, and prevent Schismatics from making parties and factions in our Nation? Did they not do it in *Queen Elizabeth's* time, and at the first return of his Sacred Majesty that now reigns? and what should hinder but they might do it now, were there but the same true *English* spirits to execute them? Oh! but now the Sectaries are grown too numerous to be suppressed: But what's the reason of their increase amongst us? was it not because our Laws (by a malevolent juncture of affairs)

have been lately laid asleep, and were never yet awakened by a due execution of them? Shall we then because they are numerous, let their numbers still encrease? they must be suppressed at last, or else all things must run into confusion: And I only desire our *English Nobility and Gentry* (whose duty it is according to their oaths, & his Majesties late Proclamations to see them executed) to consider, that if they will not suppress them by the execution of the Laws, they will soon arrive at that height, that the Long Sword must do it, or else there shall be no Government at all in our Nation: and when an Army hath once got into pay we know how hard it will be to get rid of it, and how dangerous it will prove to the Liberty and Propriety of the Subject, as well as to the Prerogatives of the Crown. For a standing Army is much like forreign Aids, which if they are Victors, most commonly prove worse to the Nation that they come to assist, then the worst of their Enemies. For they soon grow so insolent, that the King himself must be subject to the Favourite-officer amongst the Souldiers, and wear his Crown no longer then he pleaseth: and all the Proprieties and Estates of the Subjects, shall be held in a new kind of *vennon in capite*, so that they may be disseiz'd when our Lords of the Sword please, and that not by any Law, but only by plain force.

But neither is this true that they are so numerous as they seem to be, but that they would

would as easily decrease by a brisk execution of our Laws, as they did encrease by their neglect. For the greatest part of our Conventiclers go to Meetings not out of any opinion in Religion, but to carry on some trade, or little interest and design, or to vindicate the reputation of their former rebellious actions, which Reasons would all soon cease if our Laws were vigorously executed.

For if we seriously take a view of our Nation, we shall find that by our divisions, men rather turn Atheists than Phanaticks; and that out of pretence of going to private Meetings, they onely take an occasion to be absent from the publick Congregations, and to spend the Lords day either in sleeping at home, or else in their daily employments in the Field, or in what is worse, in Ale-houses, in drunkenness and debauchery. For I can speak it by my own sad experience, that in a place which hath been an ancient Seat of Divisions ever since the late wars began, where they see no probability that the Laws should be executed against them, a third part at least, if not one half of the Parish are in their practise absolute Atheists, and worship God publicly no where at all.

These are the blessed and inevitable Effects of separation, and of every ones enjoying his own Religion!

I shall say no more concerning the possibility of suppressing Divisions amongst us, but onely propose these few Questions. First,

First, Whether if the Presbyterians were by some expedient comprehension joyned with the Church, the Laws might not easily reclaim the rest?

Secondly, Whether many are not dissenters, because they would pretend Conscience for not paying Tythes? and whether such a Law as should compel them to pay all Tythes and Dues to the Church, would not reclaim many of them, and hinder a great many more from running over to their party?

Thirdly, Whether some better provision for Vicars in great Corporation-towns might not much secure the Unity of the Church, by keeping the Clergy in a capacity to subsist without an absolute dependence upon the people? For hereby they would be encouraged to defend the Church and its Institutions, without fear of starving themselves and their Families: and would be kept from poverty and necessity, which brings a contempt, not onely upon their persons but their professions, and by consequence upon Religion it self.

Fourthly, Whether the present and imminent danger of Popery and Atheism, may not be thought a sufficient motive to the Presbyterians to joyn with the Church of England upon fair proposals of a reconciliation? And whether it would not be convenient to make this the first Proposal, that they should first agree amongst themselves concerning those things

things in which they would be dispens'd withall?

Fifthly, Whether they that shall persist in a wilful separation after these Endeavours of Reconciliation, shall not as justly deserve to be quite put out of the protection of all the Laws of the Realm as the Clergy did, who would not take the Oath of Supremacy? And whether this would not be the best Expedient to reclaim them without giving our Magistrates the trouble of executing the Laws against them?

Sixthly, Whether the reviving of our Laws against Blasphemy and Atheism, Uncleaness and Debauchery, and profaning the Lords day, would not very much put a stop to the growth of Schism and Faction amongst us?

But our Author answers all these Questions at once; For he tells us, that though they might be compell'd to an outward Uniformity, yet every publick disturbance breaks all those Bonds, and then such compulsions beget and ripen all Disorders.

Is not the same thing always evident in all other Laws whatsoever? Does not every Rebellion break all the Bonds of Humane Society, and make Liberty to be the main pretense to draw in the people? What then shall our Magistrates to prevent this pretense give every man a Liberty at all times to be govern'd by what Laws he pleaseth, and so at once cancel all the Laws of the Nation? Or will they not
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(notwithstanding this fear of begetting or ripening disorders in times of publick disturbance) rather endeavour to preserve the peace at all times (as far as they can) by a due execution of the Laws? Why then should this Reason hold to destroy Religion by letting all men enjoy their own? Are there not ten to one more Rebellions caused out of the pretence of Liberty then of Religion? Or is it expedient that men be left to their Liberty to destroy one anothers Souls by running into Schism, Heresie, Judaism, Infidelity and Atheism, if so be that they be restrain'd by Laws from injuring one another in their Goods and their Bodies? Nay, would not all kind of present injuries to mens persons in a small time (without a Rock of Iron) be the necessary and unavoidable consequence of a toleration of all Religions? Have I not already demonstrated that every mans enjoying his own Religion, would soon bring men either into Atheism or else into mutual and irreconcilable Disputes and Quarrels which would destroy all Government?

He therefore (as his last shift) seems to insinuate that this may be prevented by the manner of establishing this Liberty in a Commonwealth (which he saith would require an entire discourse by it self) when I see that discourse, I shall consider of it, and make no doubt to answer it fully. In the mean time, I shall only tell him this, That if he can propose such

a way of an universal Toleration, that shall neither contradict his own Principle of every man enjoying his own Religion, nor require a standing Army to keep the Nation in obedience, *Erit mihi magnus Apollo.* For till I see it done, I must believe it absolutely impossible.

I have more particularly examined all that can appear with any shew of Argument for a general Toleration of all Religions; because I suspect this is our Authors great *Diana*, even the main design of his whole Book; For it is printed in a distinct Character from the rest of his Book, that every man should enjoy his own Religion, as though it was intended that every Reader should take a more particular notice of those words than of any thing else in his whole Book.

His Fourth and last Argument or Defence of his Cause (which he thinks so strong that it needs not the assistance of any other) I must beg his pardon, if I deal plainly with him, and tell him that it is the most senseless and ridiculous consequence that ever I met with in my life, either in his Book or in any other.

The sum of it I shall as near as I can set down in his own words, *viz.*

“It is impossible that ever any man should
“have been, is, or hereafter can be guided
“by any thing else but his own Reason, as
“in all other things, so in matters of Religion.

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He saith it over again, and gives Reasons for it.

“I say impossible. For in all belief, and
 “in all other actions the last appeal is
 “to Reason. For I choose to believe this
 “or that Doctrine, or to do this or that
 “Action, because I have some Reason for
 “it.

Now the consequence he aims at in all this must be this or nothing to his purpose ; therefore every man ought to be left onely and wholly to his own Reason (as in all other things) so in Religion, quietly to enjoy his own.

Now let us but consider how far men are left to their own Reason in all other matters, and it will soon appear that our Author hath overthrowed his whole Book by this Argument which he thinks so impregnable a defence of it.

The inward sentiments of every mans Reason in all Affairs whatsoever (notwithstanding any Law) are, ever were, and always must be free. For nothing is freer then thought. All men are left to their own judgments to think what they will of the wisdom or folly, justice or injustice, convenience or inconvenience, of those Laws they live under, because it is impossible for men to know their thoughts, much more to restrain them. And hath not every man the very same Liberty in matters of
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Religion in the Church of *England* to think what he will of any of her injunctions? So far I suppose we are agreed.

But now as in all other concerns though men have a liberty to think what they please, so long as they keep their thoughts to themselves; yet their words and actions are and must be restrained by laws: because by either of these the Commonwealth might be damaged, and our mutual peace disturb'd. So in all concerns of Religion there is not, nor can be any restraint upon our thoughts, so long as we keep them within our own breast; but if they show themselves in words or actions contrary to the Laws of the Church (because the Unity of the Church and consequently of the State is endangered, and mens eternal salvation hazarded by the propagation of false Religions), therefore penalties are absolutely necessary to restrain mens words and actions in matters of Religion as well as in any other affairs whatsoever.

Lastly, As no further use of reason is or can be allowed to every man in any Commonwealth in those things which are determined by Laws, but onely so far, as to judge whether he can or will obey them, or whether he will suffer the penalties of them: so no other liberty can be allowed in the Church to every man, onely so far, as to judge whether it is most reasonable for him to obey her Canons
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or to suffer her Censures, and the penalties consequential upon them: and as no good subject or member fit to live in a Commonwealth can think this restraint unreasonable in civil affairs, because the peace of the society does necessarily require it: so for the same reason ought no man to think such a restraint unreasonable in religious affairs, because I have already prov'd that an absolute liberty in religion would be equally dangerous to the quiet of a Nation, as an absolute licentiousness or freedom from all laws. Neither is any mans reason restrained hereby, for he is left to his own free choice (as in all civil laws, so in all laws of the Church) to consult his own reason, whether he will obey them, or whether he will venture all the punishments of soul and body, which may be the consequence of his contempt and disobedience, or whether he will quit the place where they are in force and execution.

Wherefore there is no need of any alteration of the present State of the Church of *England* by letting every man enjoy his own Religion, to allow him the same liberty in Religion as he hath in all other matters.

For as we see it evidently in the State, that was every man left free in every thing to be guided by his own Reason only (the most of men being so much blinded as they are with ignorance, passion and interest, &c. the which they would necessarily mistake for their Reason)

son) the whole Nation would be turn'd into a Field of Blood, and an heap of skulls and dead mens bones; and in a short time be rendred more desolate then the habitations of the fiercest beasts, by the frequent crimes of debauch'd persons, was it not for the due execution of wholesome Laws to restrain their debauchery: so in matters of Religion, if there were no laws to keep men in due bounds (but every man should be left to be guided onely by himself) through the many mistakes of his own Reason (which every man is subject to) the whole Nation would soon be over-run with our Authors good Clients, Jews, Turks, Heathens and Atheists, and by consequence, with Bands, Thieves, and Murderers, and all kind of debauchees and Hectors.

For my part I am not in love with such company, and therefore do desire that men might be held within the due bounds of Law: But if this Gentleman be so in love with them, that he wou'd have them encouraged by taking away any laws that might restrain them, I shall leave it to our Governours to consider, whether it is reasonable to grant him his request: and whether he hath not well deserved the publick thanks of the King and Privy-Council and both Houses of Parliament, for the great pains he hath taken in his Book, and for his most safe, most natural, and most peaceable Politick Proposals he hath made in it, for the
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reconciling all differences in matters of Religion?

Thus I take my leave of this Author and his Book together; onely adding this one word to him, that I have in no part of my Examination of his Pamphler, said any thing but what my own Reason dictated to me, and therefore he cannot be angry with me upon his own Principles, because I have guided my self wholly by my own Reason.

And I am sure I shall never be angry with my self for any thing that I have here written, because I know I have writ nothing but what became an honest Plain-dealing Countrey Gentleman.

Wherefore (let the event be what it will) I remain fully satisfied in my own Conscience by having endeavour'd to do my duty, and to show my self a sincere lover, of Peace, Religion, and the true interest of *England*.

THE END.

Advertisement to the Reader,
and the Writer of
Humane Reason.

I Onely desire that they would do me justice,
in fully considering every Paragraph of *Humane Reason* with my particular Examination
of it, and in comparing them impartially; and
then let them censure me how they will, I shall
not be much concern'd at it, but shall still re-
main,

Their humble Servant,

A. M.